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Jennie H. S. Roe
With the love of the author,
Yelen h Jenhins
Pittofield, Maine
July 18, 1908.







Yours truly, H. n. Jenhins.

BY

MRS. H. N. JENKINS,

KENDUSKEAG, ME.

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PREFACE

With much hesitation, I place this volume of poems before the public, knowing well how open to criticism they will be; but, in compliance with the wishes of my friends, I have decided to do so.

They have been written amid the cares and weariness of a mother's busy life, -often under the shadow of sickness and sorrow.

Doubtless, better opportunities for mental culture in my girlhood, and more leisure for reading and study in later years, would have enabled me to give better expression to my thoughts.

My life has been devoted to my home and family; and I have written only in spare moments, when no real duty might be neglected, recognizing the fact that I am not a genius-simply a plain home-body.

Circumscribed as my life has been,-

I cannot, from my inner world
Of tossing, billowy thought,
Bring to you shining pearls, or gems
Elaborately wrought,
Or hope to find 'mid work and care
A store of hidden diamonds rare:

And yet,-

"If any thought of mine, or sung or told, Has ever given delight or consolation, Ye have repaid me back a thousand fold. By every friendly sign or salutation.

"Therefore I hope, as no unwelcome guest, At your warm fireside, when the lamps are lighted, To have my place reserved among the rest, Nor stand as one unsought or uninvited."

H. N. J.

Kenduskeag.



INSCRIBED

TO .





Biographical Sketch.

Believing that some account of the author's life will be of interest to the reader, I have prepared the following brief sketch:

Mrs. H. N. Jenkins (Helen N. Jerrard) was born in Plymouth, Me., Sept. 9, 1836.

Her parents, the late John and Jane Jerrard, were among the pioneers of that part of Penobscot County, and began life in the forest on one of the rugged, but picturesque hills of Plymouth.

Here they made a pleasant home, and reared a family of eight children, of whom Helen was the sixth.

John Jerrard, a man well known in this part of the State for his sterling worth and business capacity, was, for many years, quite extensively engaged in lumbering on the Penobscot waters, where he acquired a competency. Highly appreciative of all that was best in literature, he hoped to give his children the advantages of a good education; but heavy losses, later in life, limited the educational privileges of the younger children, and thus blighted the dearest hope of Helen Jerrard's girlhood.

A lover of books, and fond of study, she made the most of such opportunities as she had. She also studied at home, assisted by an older brother, and read the works of the best authors, among whom Scott was her favorite.

In those years, some of the most eminent clergymen of the State, in their journeys by carriage through the country, visited the home of the Jerrards, and furnished many a rich intellectual treat for the eager listeners around the fireside; thus helping the genial, intelligent tather, and the quiet, home-loving mother, to fill the hearts of their children with reverent love for the Great All-Father, and with a desire for the highest mental culture.

In March, 1858, Helen Jerrard married Frank D. Jenkins, then of Bangor, afterward, for many years, a successful merchant in Pittsfield, Me. In 1871, his health failing, he retired from business, and the family have since lived on a farm in Kenduskeag, Me.

Mrs. Jenkins' life has been energetic and helpful. Eight children, six of whom are now living, have been tenderly cared for by this loving, self-sacrificing mother.

It may be said, "A mother's songs should not be so sad;" but those who know how much sorrow has fallen to her lot, will not wonder at the undertone of sadness in many of her poems. Sickness and death have visited her home, and left their traces on her face and in her heart. Still, she is cheerful and patient in her home, entering into all the innocent enjoyment of her children with interest and pleasure. Her health, for a few years past, has been much broken, and she writes but little.

From her childhood, encompassed by a diffidence and reticence never wholly overcome, she has led a retired life. A reverent lover of Nature, she has found much of her highest enjoyment amid rural scenes.

A. H. J.

POEMS OF NATURE AND HOME.



WILD ROSES.

Once, in a glen secluded far from view,
Beside a broken wall, wild roses grew;
And ever in the golden month of June,
When nature's sweetest voices were in tune,
When all the flowers, in wonderful array,
Made this fair month their chosen holiday,

Dainty and shy, my winsome beauties came,
Their cheeks with bashful blushes all aflame.
O, dearest, fairest roses in the land!
The humblest ones of all this regal band,

They clothe themselves in sweet simplicity, And win our love by their soft witchery.

Again I visit this enchanted glen.

Where, in my childhood, I so oft have been;

After the years have written on my face

The tell-tale lines their ruthless fingers trace,

Hoping to find my roses blooming there,

In all their old-time beauty, fresh and fair.

Again I trace the path the orchard through,
And far adown the sloping hillside, too;
Through wide green fields with violets dotted o'er,
And golden buttercups, sweet as of yore;
Where strawberries cluster richly at my feet,
And bid me welcome to their treasures sweet.

I find, at last, the ruined, broken wall,
Half hidden now by vines and brambles tall.
Ah! nevermore shall I my roses see!
They all are gone—not one is left to me!
Over me here a sombre shadow falls,
While half-forgotten scenes the past recalls.

Sad memories come unbidden to my heart.

Thus, from my sight, my friends did all depart,—
The girlish friends I loved so long ago,—
They each and all lie 'neath the daisies low,—
And, seeking now the love my heart still craves,
I find, alas! their silent, grass-grown graves.



TIME AND CHANGE.

Vague and unreal are the dreams of youth; Yet to each eager heart the veriest truth: Each out-drawn thread so tenderly inwove With golden fibres of the heart's pure love, So firm and strong its silken tissues seem. We cannot think we do but idly dream. Unbidden from the past come trooping by Sweet pictured forms in glowing imagery,-Of fancies, feelings so unlike our own,— Another self outlived, or life outgrown. Gorgeous and glowing are the colors there; Beauty and freshness blend in visions rare, On which we love to look; while, at our side. The somber present seems each thought to chide. We see the misty drapery removed From phantom idols tenderly beloved; While eager hands are reaching to enclasp The floating castles just beyond their grasp. Such airy wonders! tinged with every hue Which makes the rainbow beautiful to view. And yet they fade, and leave the hard, stern real, So little like our wonderful ideal: And we the truth, ere long, unwilling learn, Their glowing colors never will return!

Now, looking back, we take from memory's shelves These broken toys, and wonder at ourselves; Wonder at all the freaks of Time and Change, Their shadows round us fall so cold and strange. And O, how strong the yearning to bring forth Youth's roseate hues to deck again the earth! Alas! how hard to check the gathering tears, When, looking back through intervening years, We brush away the dust of care and pain, And try to find our joyous hearts again! The warmth and sunlight seem forever fled, Leaving but clouds and shadows there instead. In youth, we turn the dross to gold, with magic wand: Where now we garner, with unskillful hand, The thorns and briers which gather in our way. We cannot skip them by in childish play; They cling to us and pierce our weary feet, Till rest and peace seem but an echo sweet From some quaint song, some half-forgotten strain, Mingled with saddest tones of grief and pain. Who has not, sometime, knowing well how vain, Sighed to live o'er life's sunniest hours again? And yet, how soon such useless thoughts are gone; And we are looking upward, toiling on Toward something higher, better, more sublime, Opening before us in life's golden time.

All time is glorious, if well improved, If right and equity are truly loved.

And what is grander than a soul divine? For lofty principles a sacred shrine; By mean devices never idly swayed; But ever moving onward, undismayed By seeming failure, malice, fraud or spite; Trusting in God that He will guard the right. To such, his loving truths sweetly appeal, And holier visions to their sight reveal Of all his wonder-working ways-a life With joy and peace unbounded, ever rife. Yes, if our hearts are brave and true and strong, We shall find sweetest sunlight all along Life's pathway. We must work and win A certain conquest over wrong and sin; Then shall the pure light of God's love divine Make the rough places with rare glory shine. His love ineffable! O how it fills The soul with rapture, and distills The pearly dew of peace and holy trust Upon the desolate and arid waste Of human life; till fragrant flowers bloom Even around the death-bed and the tomb!



PAUL DEANE.

In a deep woodland far away,
The fabled realm of nymph and fay,
Stands a rude cottage, old and gray.

Paul Deane had chosen this strange spot In which to build his rustic cot. Whate'er had been the charm he sought,

I cannot tell; and yet, I know The very bitterness of woe Had made this man a cynic now.

His sister Mary, toiling there To make their home look bright and fair, Had the sweet look a saint might wear.

Her trusting spirit had attained The height of faith by martyrs gained,— Hope's cheering beacon never waned.

She grieved in silence oft to hear His cruel taunts, his logic drear, His words of withering doubt and fear. One wintry morn, in fretful mood, Upon the hearthstone old and rude, Before the glowing fire he stood.

His toil and hardship musing o'er, He said, "You think God loves the poor! Life is a mockery! nothing more!

"I have no faith! There is no God! The Bible is, perchance, a fraud, By some imposter sent abroad."

She turned with a low, weary sigh, As if from a sad reverie, Lifting her hands beseechingly;

Like Jesus, "answering not a word," Though in her heart each sentence heard The deepest fount of feeling stirred.

At length, he slowly walked away To his hard toil, nor marked the day In its resplendent majesty.

Transformed, the forest met the sight,—A crystal bower in frost-work dight,
Wrought by deft fingers in the night.

The moss-grown cabin bending low Beneath its weight of drifted snow, With icicles was all aglow. The window-panes, in rare device, Were broidered o'er with snowy lace, Tasseled and looped with dainty grace.

The shrubs about the creaking door With gleaming pearls were bending o'er, Like coral reefs on some bright shore;

And countless diamonds lustre shed From the tall maples overhead,— A glittering canopy outspread.

The silvery ferns so still and white, Bathed in the soft, auroral light, Were tinted like the rainbow bright.

A sea of glass the lakelet seemed, Whence rays of radiant glory beamed, As through the woodland path it gleamed.

And he could walk there dumb and blind, Nor aught of joy or gladness find, Doubting his God, hating mankind!

Mary in wonder looked around, And moved by reverence profound, Knelt humbly on the shining ground.

Her soul with deep devotion thrilled, And this one thought her glad heart filled,— "Thou art my God! I am thy child!"

MEMORIES.

Sweet pictures bright come back to-night
From the old, old happy years,
When, nestled in my father's arms,
My hands clasped softly in his palms,
He soothed my childish fears.

In all the land, never so grand
Or sweet has music seemed,
As that glorious, rare old hymn
Sung in the twilight soft and dim,
While the stars above us gleamed.

And listening still, I feel the thrill
Of perfect joy once more:
"While shepherds watched their flocks,"—
Surely, I heard the rippling brooks.
In dreamland, o'er and o'er!

And on the ground, seated around,
I saw their faces shine.
"The angel of the Lord came down,"—
I saw the harp and golden crown,
The glory all divine.

The world grew bright with holy light
When came the seraph throng,
With gleaming garments white and fair.
Their joyous voices filled the air,—
"Praise God," their thrilling song.

O years gone by! why will ye fly
And leave but shadows drear?
The dreams, the aspirations wild,
The yearning hopes of the eager child,
Fruitless and vain appear.

Yet once again, with cruel pain.

Each blighted hope I trace.

Twas sweet to dream in the long ago,
Though idle folly it seemeth now,
For lack of gift or grace.

My dreams are o'er; and evermore
Beyond my reach I see
The boon I thought earth's highest good.
Dear Jesus, Thou hast understood,
And yet denied it me.

Thou knowest why I may not fly,—
A fledgeling poor and weak.
I know that on that other shore
My spirit fetterless shall soar.
My voiceless soul shall speak.

OUR LOVED ONES.

Waking at midnight from unquiet sleep,
I hear a storm in wrathful fury sweep
Around our door. The wild winds shriek
And moan. Strange voices speak,
In muttering tones, of cold and want and pain;
Then scream and laugh, or shout aloud again,
Like demons holding carnival to scare
Poor homeless, friendless creatures to despair,—
Clutching at them with icy fingers fierce,
Whose touch, like cruel darts, their bodies pierce.
O that some power might bless each hapless wight
With food and raiment, warmth and cheery light!
Pity, O God, the suffering poor to-night!

The dear ones with us now are safe, I know; Yet noiselessly about their rooms I go, Placing my hand upon each tender cheek, Kissing their warm lips lightly, lest I break The secret spell which now so closely holds Each joyous spirit in its slumb'rous folds.

Sleep on, to-night, thank God, secure from harm, Heedless alike of cold and wind and storm!

Yet here and there a vacant room I mind;

No faces on the pillows can I find;
Quickly I pass my hand each one across,
Feeling a painful sense of want and loss.
The pearly snowflakes whirl and drift around
One little grave, one silent, shadowy mound.
Why do I shudder at this chilling thought?
I know, dear Willie, it can harm thee not.
Safer than all the rest from pain and sin,
No ill can come to thee, Christ's fold within.
One, drawn by mystic bands of faith and love,
Went out from us, life's hopes and joys to prove,
With him who gently holds her girlish hand,
Journeying through life's sunny summerland.

I grieve to see my boys and girls grow tall.

Lest we, too soon, shall lose the nestlings all.

If they, at last, must drift away from me.

Launching their boats upon life's untried sea,

Then I can only wait and hope and pray

That God will be their pilot all the way.

When tempest-tossed, on rock and reef adrift,

Almighty Father, only Thou canst lift

The storm-cloud, calm the troubled deep!

Thou only canst our treasures safely keep!

THE FOREST IN WINTER.

I will visit the depths of the woodland wild,
The dim old forest, sombre aisled:
In the North-wind's chariot I will go
Out in the realm of the beautiful snow,
The wonderful snow.

I will look for the dear little chickadees,
And the sparrows flitting among the trees,
Singing their songs so cheery and sweet,
Or hopping about on the frozen sleet
With bare brown feet.

The frost and rain have a miracle wrought,
More beautiful far than our happiest thought:
Covered with gems are the branches brown,
And myriad diamonds are flashing down
From each jeweled crown.

O, what can compare with this silvan scene?
Can aught be more lovely? Not here, I ween.
Even the beauties of summer-time seem
Scarcely to rival the glint and the gleam
Of this wonderland dream.

Far up on a branch of a tree-top high,
A sentinel lone, with a vigilant eye,
Is perched aloft on a gnarled old oak,—
A raven black, with ominous croak

And dolorous look.

The rabbits have borrowed an ermine cloak.

The squirrels come out to laugh and mock

To chatter and scold at the North-wind's wrath,

Because the gay leaves were all frozen to death

By his icy breath.

Each withered shrub and fern, low-bowed, Is muffled close in a ghostly shroud.

Out of their priestly cowls they peer,

And say, with a quizzical, comical leer,

"Ah! why are you here?"

Jubilant, joyous, each tall evergreen
Is decked and bedight in a dazzling sheen.
They nod, and beckon with hands reaching out,
Tossing their beautiful arms about
With a gleesome shout.

A whisper comes from the drooping larch;
A sad, sweet requiem chants the birch;
The willows' lithe branches are bending low,
Their finger-tips touching the frosty snow
As they sway to and fro.

The beeches shiver and quiver with pain,
And rattle their crystal armor again,
Clinging tightly to each tattered shred
Of their rustling garments faded and dead,
With pitiful dread.

Each tree has its own sweet minstrelsy,—
A loud or soft-toned melody.
Methinks, as I listen, I plainly hear,
From some lonely tree-top, a cry of fear,
Or a falling tear.

The sadest, the deepest emotion I feel

Over my spirit at eventide steal,

When hushed is the music of every bird,

And scarcely a bough by the wind is stirred,

Or a sound is heard.

Grand and sublime is the solitude
Of the evening hours in the silent wood.
I stop to listen with bated breath—
The hush and quiet a mystery hath
Like the stillness of death.

The moonlight falls on the trackless snow,
And shadowy spectres come and go.
God's presence is here—a refuge, a tower!
As never before, in this silent hour
I feel His power.

THANKSGIVING EVENING THOUGHTS.

I have been thinking, since this day is ended,
How in our lives sorrow and joy are blended.
Day of thanksgiving! still our hearts are sad.
Day of rejoicing! How can we be glad?
How can we be as thankful as we ought
For all God's mercies, while the bitter thought
Is present with us, one will never come
Again to meet us in this earthly home?
The happiest voice of all is hushed to-night.
The face which always shone with tenderest light
We cannot see. We miss the cheery notes
Of sweet home music. How each echo floats
Back from the past, still brightening every room,
As silvery moonbeams soften midnight gloom!

One year ago we welcomed home our boy:
His lustrous eyes were full of hope and joy.
How could we think death, in this cruel way,
Would rob us of our treasure ere to-day!
Shall we not hear him speak or sing again?
O must we call and listen still in vain?
As billows wild break o'er some rock-bound reef,
Our human hearts are crushed by waves of grief.

How all those scenes of weary care and pain Pass and repass through aching heart and brain!

With smiles we hid as best we could our tears, And drove away our cruel, torturing fears. Hope spread the glamour of her smiles around him, And with her silken cords to earth-life bound him. His trustful spirit did not faint or shrink, Though near and nearer came he to death's brink. We shuddered as the waves crept round his feet; While he, with hopeful heart and smile still sweet, Seemed not to see the chilling flood so near: We knew not if he felt a doubt or fear. At last, the truth so carefully concealed, In God's own time was to his thought revealed. Then he was ready, willing, glad to go, If the good Father deemed it better so. With many a tender, loving, last farewell, Our precious boy "asleep in Jesus" fell. Is he still near us though we cannot see? Is he not with us as he hoped to be? We know the Father called our dear one hence; Has He not given us this sweet recompense? We trust, we know, beyond our darkened ken, He walks and talks; he is alive again, Arrayed in glory, in seraphic light: I would not call him back to earth to-night.

Is it not better far than living here?
Though Earth is lovely, it is glorious there.

With listening angels, sometime I shall hear
His voice again, for he will meet me there;
Sometime, I'll feel his arms about me clinging,
And hear him joyous anthems sweetly singing;
Or rapturous peans—soft, sweet vesper lays—
Melodious symphonies and hymns of praise.
My heart cries out, "O God, Thou knowest best!
I humbly bow to thy supreme behest.
I know that Thou art good and wise and just;
And, though I cannot see, I still will trust."



GOD'S WAYS ARE BEST.

"God stay thee in thine agony, my boy, I cannot see thee die."

-N.P. WILLIS.

"Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution, He lives whom we call dead."

-H.W.Longfellow.

Life's brittle threads, long worn, were slowly breaking: So soon must come the sleep which knows no waking, To him, our boy, for whom the angel waited As for a traveler on the way belated. Delirious dreams and fancies hovered o'er him, While Memory spread her vivid scenes before him. He joined the whirl of busy life once more, Calling to Charlie! Charlie! o'er and o'er; Thinking his friends around him here and there; Seeming, with them, the old-time tasks to share. So worn and tired! and yet, he never slumbered, While all the night the weary hours we numbered. Trembling, I crouched outside the open door, With chilling fear and dread, as ne'er before, O'erwhelmed. I could not see him die! The very thought was untold agony. With many a wild, beseeching prayer

That God my darling cruel pain would spare, Alone I battled with my shuddering heart, Until the long night's blackness did depart. Then, with the light, came strength again to me; Over my weaker self a victory.

And still he talked! a word, a sentence broken: "Father!" and "Mother!" often fondly spoken, As if those names were graven on his heart Too deep to be erased—of it a part. O Death! if kind thy mission here below, How canst thou tear our quivering heart-strings so? Thou givest to the weary rest and peace; To frail humanity a sweet release From pain; and vet, we cower and shrink from thee-So grim, so dread, this awful mystery! At last sleep came. God only knew how blest, How glad were we, when he could sleep and rest; Although we knew so soon the end must come, And he awaken in his heavenly home. Ere this, one morn, with vision clear and bright, He greeted us with new and strange delight. Conscious that he was near "the vast untried," With trustful love his face seemed glorified. He clung to us with many a fond embrace, And loving words to make our sorrow less, "O, you are all so dear to me!" he said,

"Yet do not weep or mourn when I am dead. I will be with you still,— a help a guide. I fear not death, for God is by my side."

And he is gone! our boy, our well-beloved! Forever from our sight, while here, removed. God bless the friends who cheered his heart each day, While death's chill shadows gathered round his way; And o'er the gloom of those sad, funeral hours Bespread the brightness of earth's fairest flowers. Surely, I know it was a priceless boon To train for Heaven this bright and shining one! How many hours I watched with pride and joy That harm came not to him, my baby boy; And, in his childhood, that no taint of sin His guileless heart should ever enter in; That coarse vulgarity, or words profane, The lips I kissed so often might not stain. Hatred and scorn for all things low and vile I sought to stamp upon his mind, the while; And when he grew from boyhood up to youth, He was the soul of manliness and truth.

There came a time when I must let him go Out in the world, his manhood's work to do. This was my heartfelt prayer: "O God, to thee I give my boy! O keep him pure for me!" To die, "wearing the white flower of a blameless life," Were better far than years of moil and strife.

What might have been? The grief, the bitter woe,
The ills thus spared him, here I cannot know.
God's ways are best. I know His love is grand.

Vernon is happier in that brighter land.

No pain or harm can ever come to him;
No shadows ever his glad spirit dim.

His feet, which once the earth so bravely trod,
Now proudly climb the eternal hills of God.



THE SUNSET ILLUMINATION.

Nov. 27, 1883.

A wondrous glory gilds the western sky— A rich, unrivaled brilliancy, Showing, with rare intensity, The rainbow tints.

This bright, auroral, burnished light Seems, as we look, to come to-night From other worlds just out of sight Beyond the hills.

O vision grand, magnificent!
As if the glorious Orient,
To thee, for one brief hour, hadst lent
Her sweetest charm.

The bare brown trees are glorified;
The gates of sapphire opened wide
For us, in this sweet eventide;
And God is here.

Our robes the wings of seraphs brush: We feel the power, the fearful hush, As Moses at "the burning bush" His presence felt.

How sweet the mingled awe and bliss Which come to us in hours like this! God writes his grandest mysteries

On scrolls of fire.

SPRINGTIME GLORIES.

The beautiful Springtime bright and fair, With its balmy beauties rich and rare, Meets and greets us everywhere.

The twittering birds dart through the air, Or warble, in the tree-tops bare, Outgushing notes of praise and prayer.

The willows unfold to our eager view Their velvety catkins shining through Little brown waterproofs fresh and new

Down creviced boulders dark and gray, The singing brooklets find their way, And laugh and dance in freedom gay.

Violets peep from each mossy mound, And, listening, bend to the joyous sound Of the singing birds and brooks unbound.

The frogs' shrill vespers resound at eve, Rejoicing their wintry haunts to leave, Echoing Nature's glad reprieve. The twilight tinges with golden hue
The fleecy cloud-caps; and gleaming through
Are twinkling stars and fathomless blue.

In deep ravines the shadows creep,
Their sceret *fantaisies* to keep
Where glinting moonbeams rarely peep.

There, frost and snow are hiding yet Their exiled monarch's coronet, With pearls and diamonds interset.

Ah, well may Winter hide his face! The morrow's sunshine may efface. Of his late glory every trace.

Then welcome be the Springtime bright! Our hearts exultant, with delight And gratitude are filled to-night.

Heaven, smiling, o'er the glad earth bends; Beauty with glory meets and blends, And sacred joy to life-work lends.



MY OLD BIRCH TREE.

Perchance, you have not seen this grand old tree. Which was so like a precious friend to me? You would not guess, if you should see it now, How beautiful it was one year ago, So prim it stands in its accustomed place, Bereft of all its glory and its grace. Nature had drest it with such lavish care. Its peerless beauty was a picture rare. The sturdy trunk, the branches far outspread, Formed a broad dome of verdure overhead. Long, swaying boughs drooped almost to the ground, With leafy twigs inlaced and wove around. So low the branches grew, the children oft Like squirrels ran and perched themselves aloft, And with the birds a merry chorus sang, Till their glad voices through the orchard rang. And sometimes, mimic "keeping house" they played, While I enjoyed the cool and restful shade.

And do you wonder that I loved this tree, It was so beautiful, so fair to see? But now, alas! its loveliness is gone,— Its drooping branches severed, one by one! It stands aloof, distant and cold to me,
Reaching not down its hands so lovingly;
As people, sometimes, whom to love we try,
Chill and repel us, lacking sympathy.
You ask me why this sacrifice was made?
Because some pear trees nestled in its shade.
They could not feel the sunshine or the dew,
But dwarfed and puny in its shadow grew.
And yet, I could not bear to have it so.
O ruthless axe! I felt each cruel blow.
Of God's own handiwork it was a part,
And every blow fell on my quivering heart.

Some things I love; I cannot tell you why I cling to them with such tenacity. I cannot help the pain, or check the tears For what, to you, a foolish whim appears. I love them more than I have words to tell. They weave about my heart some subtle spell; And, if I lose these dearly cherished friends, Their sweet companionship forever ends.



FIRELIGHT FANCIES.

By the fire I sit and dream, While the glowing embers seem With bewild'ring light agleam.

In this wierd and witching light, Intervening years take flight,— Pleasant fancies come to-night.

Throngs of dear ones come and go,— White robes tinged with golden glow,— One I loved is with me now.

Dear old Grandma! even yet Her image in my heart is set, A picture I can ne'er forget.

She crossed the Mystic Tide, I know; And yet, methinks I see her now Rocking softly to and fro.

Now beside her chair I stand, Holding close the wrinkled hand, Fair and soft in Spirit-land.

A meek and patient, face I see Looking wistfully at me, Smiling ever tenderly. Such a look of sweet appeal! All the old-time joy I feel O'er my spirit softly steal.

Yet the room grows strangely dim; For with tears my eyes will brim, Whispering her favorite hymn.

Listen! I can hear her sing,—
Hear the joyous anthem ring.
Now like bird-notes on the wing.

I can hear a swelling strain, A glad, rapturous refrain, Such as I shall hear again

When the night is past and gone, On some other starry morn, In some other fairer dawn,

Bursting into glorious day; When my spirit slips away From its prison walls of clay;

Then, all pain and sorrow fleeing, Filling, thrilling all my being, Comes the perfect joy of seeing,

Face to face, my Father, God, And my Saviour, Christ the Lord, By the angel hosts adored! Nevermore through blinding tears, Mocked by phantom doubts and fears, Mourning over miss-spent years,

Joy triumphant shall be mine; For all spirits there shall shine Fair and pure in light divine.



A MORNING RIDE.

One summer morning, long ago,
When earth and sky were all aglow
With daybreak's rosy light,
We journeyed a fair country through,
While yet the sparkling drops of dew
With azure tints were bright.

Tall thistles stood erect and proud,
Veiling their faces in a cloud
Of filmy, fleecy lace.
Fair buttercups the fields did crowd,
And clover-heads were softly bowed,
As if in silent grace.

From wayside bush and tree, was heard
The sweetest song of every bird,
Outgushing cheerily.
The leaflets, deeply veined and shirred,
By the cool zephyrs lightly stirred,
Were dancing merrily.

Each cottage window seemed a-blaze,
As o'er the hills the gleaming rays
Of amber sunlight peered,
Chasing deep in the darksome maze
Of the dim woodland's hidden ways,
The frighted shadows wierd.

The world had never seemed so fair;
I quite forgot life's fret and care;
My heart sang all the way
Unspoken songs of praise and prayer;
For God and heaven were everywhere
That blissful summer day.

We traversed hills and valleys wide,
Where gleaming waters oft we spied
In many a lovely spot;
And long before the sun had dried
The misty webs where fairies hide,
We reached the place we sought.

The greeting I shall ne'er forget,
Or the dear, loving face we met
Within the open door;
The hands outreaching eagerly
To clasp our own so tenderly,
I love to think it o'er.

The picture was so sweet, so fair!
The dear old lady standing there,
With look of glad surprise;
The soft eyes and the shining hair;
The trustful look a saint might wear,—
Are sacred memories.

The farmhouse, in its grassy nest.

Betokened comfort, joy and rest;

Home pleasures sweet and rare.

And while I tarried there a guest,
I thought its inmates truly blest,

Such loving hearts were there.

SABBATH MORNING IN WINTER.

Thou glorious morning! beautiful and bright!

The world is bathed in God's transcendent light,—
As if the pearly gates had opened wide,
And earth and sky alike were glorified.

Enraptured, on the scene sublime I gaze,
And every thought ascends to God in praise.

The glittering host of stars, receding, seem
To veil their faces, fading like a dream;
The earth in her bright garniture of snow
Is radiant now! O, can one wail of woe,
One cry of agony, from grief or pain,
Be heard in all this white-robed land again!
So like an emblem of immortal light
This sacred morning dawns upon our sight!

O, what more beautiful than this may be!
What more of glory can we wish to see?
Why list for music from the spirit world,
Or sigh to see bright angel-wings unfurled?
Our God has made all things so fair and bright
We need but look around to find delight;
And yet how many, blindfold, grope their way
In error, fearfulness and gloom to-day!
No joy or beauty meet their darkened sight;

But fearful doubts, and shadows black as night. Why walk so desolate 'mid earth's fair bloom, And dim her brightness with imagined gloom? O, let us look to God with trustful eyes, Nor make life's journey o'er "a bridge of sighs" His richest blessings ever round us fall; His bounteous gifts are full and free to all.

Sin only mars our peace, our hope destroys;
Its dreadful presence blights our sweetest joys.
If pure in heart, this earth an Eden seems;
Its beauty, fairer than our rarest dreams.
And He whose goodness far exceeds our thought
Or knowledge, this glorious truth has taught,—
That we are His great family; and He,
In His own time and way, shall make man free
From sin's dark thralldom and the power of death,
And perfect all, through penitence and faith.



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CHRISTMAS SONG FOR OUR OLD HOME.

Christmas morning! ever sacred
For the blessed hope it brings!
We would praise Thee, O our Saviour,
With a harp of thousand strings.

Come, O come, great God, our Father!
Infinite in love and power;
Bless us with Thy gracious presence,
And Thy spirit at this hour.

Make us ever meek and humble, Patient, bearing every cross; Jesus shall each burden lighten Of its heavy weight of dross.

Perfect love alone shall lead us

By the waters clear and still;

Casting out all fear and error,

Sweetest peace our hearts shall fill.

We are gathered at the fireside,
In this home to all so dear,
To rejoice in Thy great goodness,
Though some seats are vacant here.

We feel our spirits chastened,
And our eyes with tears will fill;
For we cannot see their faces,
E'en though they are with us still.

Father! bless our dear kind parents, For they trust alone in Thee: Thou their greatest joy and comfort, Thou their rock, their refuge be!

Oft, perchance, they stop to listen
For the ripple of that tide
Which shall bear some waiting spirit
Safely to the other side;—

Some dear voice be hushed forever. In their home now gladly heard, When the waters of death's river By the boatman's dip are stirred.

And we wonder who shall soonest Voyage o'er this untried sea,— Father, mother, sister, brother,— Thou alone canst know, not we.

Brightest beams come flashing over, Like the morning's golden sheen; Faith and hope are the beacon lights From that haven yet unseen.

And, trusting Him who reigns supreme In wisdom, grace and love, We shall sometime greet each loved one In that better home above.

TRANSFORMATION.

All day long the pitiless rain Has beaten and dashed on each window-pane: The rude wind swaying with might and main

The sorrowful tree-tops bare. And, watching, I saw the raindrops freeze On the finger-tips of the tall birch trees, As, white and stark, they outreach to tease Their neighbors, the cedars fair.

The stately pines, in a friendly group, With their weight of pearly gems a-droop, Flutter and dance like a merry troupe,

While the wind-harps round them play. And now, as the sun puts off his shroud, And brightly shines through the riven cloud, The snow-birds twitter and chirp aloud

To frighten the shadows away.

The silvery leaves of the beeches seem Just waking up from a long, sad dream, To catch for a moment the fitful gleam

Of warmth and color and light. Clinging there like a jeweled crown, They hide the branches, bare and brown, Till the fierce winds batter and drive them down

In the snow so cold and white.

The quivering grass and ferns caress The Earth in her regal, spotless dress, And whisper praise of her loveliness,

Kissing her fair, dainty feet;
For Winter now, with his magical wand,
Has touched the dear little elfin band,
And lo! in ermine so rich and grand,
They wait the sunshine to greet.

We hear the brooks and the rivers say, "The Frost-king soon must yield his sway; The sunshine our fetters will melt away."

How sweet are these tokens to me!

Desolation and death shall not always reign;

The birds and the flowers will come again;

Our glorified spirits, from sorrow and pain

Shall sometime and somewhere be free.



THE CHAPLET OF FAITH.

Last night, in wildering dreamland,
I saw a marvelous tree:
Laden with amaranthine bloom,
The boughs drooped over me.
But far more beautiful than all,
In glorious garments drest,
My sainted Angel-mother there
Received me as her guest.

And the look of soul-lit glory
Was beaming in her face,
As in those weary, waiting hours,—
A look of heavenly grace,—
When her true heart, self-forgetful
Of all weariness and pain,
Thrilled with the deep devotion
Of her deathless love again.

There, close around us in a group,
Were gathered, side by side,
The dear ones who had gone before,—
Loved faces glorified,—
And clasping Father's hand I stood.
How with joy his face did shine
As he caught the sweet reflection
Of her look of love divine!

I longed to embrace my Mother,
And press her lips again;
But she seemed so fair and holy,
And I so poor and mean,
I could only look and listen
To each tender, thrilling word:
"I have come to bring good tidings
Of the truth so often heard.

"I find in Heaven peace and joy
Surpassing every thought;
O, the half was never told you!
Let this truth be ne'er forgot.
Could you look upon the Saviour,
Jesus Christ, the risen Lord,
You would shout and sing 'Hosanna!
Praise to the eternal God!'

"But that face, divine, supernal,
Mortal eyes may not behold;
Or the streets of yonder city,
Likened unto precious gold.
In his own good time, remember,
You shall cross the shining tide;
For you see the light is streaming
Over from the other side.

"You have read each word of promise; Strive to do God's holy will; And be sure He never faileth His good pleasure to fulfill. He who ne'er forgets or slumbers,
Holds you in His mighty hand.
All shall be redeemed and happy,—
Not one wanderer from this land.

"Now I'll weave for you a chaplet
Of the flowers from this tree,
As a seal of faith, undoubting
Future immortality.
But, if sin your hands should blacken,
It will wither, fade and die;
While its fragrant beauty ever
Shall reward true piety."

Then, with upward look, a blessing
Was besought for every one;
Yet I thought with deeper pathos
For one dear, one precious son;
One around whom every fibre
Of her heart's pure love did twine,
In the earth-life, so devoted,—
Can it now be more divine?

Vanished then the vision lovely
From my joyous, raptured sight;
And around me only darkness
And the stillness of the night.
Yes, O yes! the dear Lord helping,
We will keep thy chaplet pure!
For we know Jehovah reigneth,
And his promises are sure.

TO MY FATHER ON HIS EIGHTIETH BIRTH-DAY.

Read at a Family Meeting on the Eightleth Birthday of John Jerrard, of Plymouth, Me., Feb. 14, 1880.

Gladly we have come together,
Songs of gratitude to raise,
For your life and health, dear Father,
Giving God alone the praise—
Wonderful are all His ways!

O, how much of joy and sadness
Does your life's rich chalice hold!
Eighty years of grief and gladness,
Work and worship, cares untold
Gifts and blessings manifold.

Many scenes, in retrospection,
Crowd upon our thoughts to-day;
Broken ties of fond affection,—
Dear ones gone,—O, where are they?
Graves are scattered by the way.

First, we see an orphaned boy,
Buffeting the world alone,
Brave and hopeful, full of joy.
Youth and boyhood soon had flown,
And the lad a man was grown.

How erect and strong his shoulders,
When he first so proudly stood
'Mid the trees and granite boulders
Of the forest's solitude,
In his cabin low and rude!

How the birds and squirrels wondered,
When the sturdy youngster came;
When his axe the saplings sundered
For his rustic cottage frame,—
For a home,—how sweet the name!

Morning, noon and evening, singing
Anthems full and clear,
While each heavy stroke was ringing
Through the woodlands far and near,—
Full of manly pride and cheer.

Yet this home seemed lone and dreary
On the pleasant hilltop fair,
With its hearth so broad and cheery,
Fashioned by untiring care;
For no one to love was there,

Till a maiden, shy and loving,
Came within its open door,
By her trusting spirit, proving
Love's unwritten, mystic lore,
Taught by angels evermore.

All her present rimm'd and bounded
By the woodlands and the sky;
Yet, by Nature's charms surrounded,
Swiftly on the moments fly;
Winged by hope they hurry by.

Scarce three years of joy unmeasured—
Bliss of motherhood supreme—
Then a severed ringlet treasured,
Of white wings a fitful gleam!
Was it but a cruel dream?

Still, with steady purpose striving
To improve their rural home,
By united efforts thriving,
Reaping where their hands had sown,
As the fruitful years have shown,

Soon, a wonderful magician .

Had transformed the rural scene;
Brought them labor's sweet fruition,
Wide-spread fields and pastures green,
Sprinkled with the daisy's sheen;

While a troop of laughing elves
Played about the farm-house dear:—
Surely, they were not ourselves!
Else some trickster has been here,
And sad work has made, I fear.

Their's were pretty, childish graces,
Brown and golden-haired were they;
We have sober, wrinkled faces,
Faded are our locks to-day;
They were blithe and glad and gay.

One by one the nestlings left them,

Till. at last, they all were gone;

Then the parent birds, bereft them,

Left the nest whence they had flown,

Left the hearth so cheerless grown.

Now the landmarks seem uncertain,
For we walk beneath a cloud;
And we fain would drop the curtain
O'er the casket and the shroud,
Lest we weep and cry aloud.

One, with heart and soul unspotted
As the purest, whitest snow,
Left us,—every page unblotted
On the tablets here below,—
To a fairer land to go.

Mother! still our hearts are crying, Still we reach our hands to you! For we know your love undying, Rich as sunshine, sweet as dew, Will be always grand and true. Bitter mingles with the sweetness
Of each cup our lips may drain;
And the spirit's full completeness
Must be purchased oft with pain;
Yet we ask not help in vain.

And, to-day, we will remind us
Of the treasures with us yet;
And the tears must never blind us,
We must ne'er repine or fret,
Though we never can forget.

And we know the dear ones ever
Are around us everywhere;
And, to-day, methinks they liover
Very near our Father's chair,
Bending fondly o'er him there.

Absent ones in thought are living
With the group assembled here,
Joining in our glad thanksgiving
To the God whom we revere,
Worshiping with love sincere.

Many years, by His great mercy, May you live, our Father dear. Well and strong, serenely happy, Full of comfort and good cheer, Meeting oft your children here. May God kindly keep and bless you,

Is our earnest heartfelt prayer,—
Loved ones waiting to caress you,

While you climb each upward stair,

Toward the "many mansions" fair,

To the last bright round attended
By their faithful ministry.
When this long, rich life is ended,
Glad their "welcome home" will be,
Glad their songs of victory.

Life's sweet twilight lengthens, lingers
On the sunset-lighted hills,
Like the touch of angel fingers.
Every heart with rapture fills;
Every soul uplifts and thrills!

Through a vista far outstretching,
Beautiful your life appears!
Grand and glorious, outreaching
Over eighty well-spent years,—
Like a sheaf of golden ears!

Faith and trust in Christ, the Saviour,
Fills your heart with godly fear;
For your strength is in Jehovah,
The All-Father, ever near,
Who will all your burdens bear.

THE OLD FARM-HOME OF MY CHILDHOOD.

Ah! never can I paint the picture well,
Or half the pleasures of my childhood tell;
Though bright and glowing every scene appears,
Changeless and beautiful through all the years.
I dream of the old homestead day and night;
Of the dear haunts which once were my delight;
The home by hills and pleasant valleys bounded,
By lakelet fair and woodland deep surrounded.
No other scenes like these my heart can thrill:
This spot, of all the earth, is dearest still.

How sweet the springtime was when first the trees Grew green and bright, our happy hearts to please; When the birds came as God's invited guests, To choose their mates and build their downy nests. Sparrows and robins, busy as the bees, Sang all the while their songs among the trees. Sweet violets and daisies every morn, In rich attire, crowded the grassy lawn; While grasshoppers were making merry sound In the old orchard and the fields around. And, in the doorway arched by drooping leaves, We watched the swallows building 'neath the eaves. The happiest working-folks in all the land

Each busy couple built a palace grand, For very gladness singing all the day. O, that we mortals were as wise as they! As full of sweetness as each bird and flower, Praising the great All-Father every hour! Through the long night-time while we sweetly slept, The wakeful frogs their tireless vigils kept In "Willow Pond," where shallop, boat and raft My brothers tried,—full many a luckless craft. Their crazy hulks, sunk in the soft brown mold, Of fearful wrecks and sad disasters told. Near by, a spot was closely walled around, With rustic tablet at each moss-grown mound, The grave of every hapless bird and kitten, Whose epitaphs, alas! were never written. A window where the hills and valleys fair Blended in sweetest pictures here and there, Was ever my retreat at sunset's hour, When earth and sky received their richest dower; When, for a time, the veil of clouds was riven, And I could almost see the gates of Heaven. How sweetly floated over hill and dell The far-off music of the old church bell! Its mellow tones my listening spirit awed, And through the stillness called my heart to God In sweet communion, worship as divine As ever blest my soul at templed shrine! Even now, in dreams, I hear its distant chime.

Alas! how soon the cruel hand of Time Despoils our treasures! Now, with bitter pain, We search to find the dear old home in vain. The fields are there, the house and grassy lawn: And yet, the charm which made it home is gone. God's hand has placed the shining crown of gold On father's brow, for all his years are told. No mother's face now greets us at the door; She waits our coming on a fairer shore. Brothers and sisters, whither are they gone? They gather not around the old hearthstone. We listen for their voices each and all; They do not answer to our eager call. We find them widely scattered, far and near, Amid life's busy scenes of toil and care. Our joyous childhood seems but yesterday. Now, we grow old; we hurry on our way, Through shade and sunshine, ever searching To find the Master's hand outreaching To lead us where we may, at last, in truth, Renew again the spring-time of our youth.



THE WILDWOOD FOUNTAIN.

Deeply hidden in a woodland,
Is a fountain pure and sweet;
Its depths are placid and serene,
With mossy brim of velvet sheen,
Where fairies love to dance, I ween,
And fabled wood-nymphs meet.

The deepest shadows linger
Within this silvan nook;
And scarcely can a sunbeam bright,
Or twinkling watcher of the night,
Or the moon's soft bewitching light
Upon its surface look.

Each grand old forest monarch
A silent sentry stands;
And far above its waters deep,
Where mirrored beauties ever sleep,
Its cloistered secrecy to keep,
They clasp their leafy hands.

A group of pleasure-seekers

Once sought this cool retreat,

When, through the over-hanging trees,

The gently-sighing summer breeze Sang softly, tuneful melodies In whispers low and sweet.

And one, a brown-eyed maiden,
Was building castles bright;
Far into the future glancing,
Giving us views entrancing,
While over us all were dancing
The shadows flecked with light.

Beside her, on a grassy mound,
Reclined a handsome youth;
And he the untried future scanned,
And for himself a pathway planned,—
A bright career, a life-work grand,
Wealth, happiness, forsooth.

And we who sat and listened
Were dreaming, too, the while—
Youth's dreams, so fair and flowery—
Of love, the old, old story;
Or heights of fame and glory,
And fickle Fortune's smile.

Ah, nevermore will come again
The brightness of those years!
Those halcyon days are vanished all!

The pictures which our hearts recall—
We see each cherished structure fall,
Through unavailing tears.

And now, how gladly would we seek
The well of "Loch Maree,"
And in its mystic waters kind
Leave all our fretting cares behind;
A cure for all life's trials find,—
Peace and humility.

O give us faith to look beyond
The fleeting things we see!
When fever-fires our hearts are burning,
From maddening paths of folly turning,
The truer aims of life discerning,
Our God we come to thee!



TO THE KENDUSKEAG.

Thy gleaming waters, deep and wide, With gathering impulse onward glide: Thy madcap freaks dost think to hide,

O laughing Kenduskeag?
The golden sunlight now is flushing
Thy drifts of misty spray, out-gushing;
O'er every barrier madly rushing,

Fair, fickle Kenduskeag!

Now dancing on in mertiest mood, As if thou wouldst be kind and good; Or, angry, reckless, strong and rude,

All proper bounds o'er-leaping,
In sheds and cellars, here and there,
In shops and stables,—everywhere—
Up in our very streets you dare
To come, so slily creeping.

And then, ere long, with mud-stained face, Receding, back with measured pace, With more of sullenness than grace, To your old haunts you steal:

Where oft, with noiseless feet, instead,

You loiter on your rock-strewn bed, As if your very life were fled,— You scarcely turn a wheel.

Then idle, useless stands each mill, Which runs so blithely at your will, When, climbing to the window-sill,

You take a peep inside.
We do not like your willful ways,
And will be sparing of our praise,
E'en when, in summer's gladsome days,
'Neath grassy banks you glide.

How sweetly pictured are the trees In sunny nooks and shadowy leas, As, softly swaying in the breeze,

They reach their hands to you. We know and prize these beauties well, In many a quiet, flower-fringed dell; Far more than we will ever tell,

We love, and fear thee, too.

For, wicked, willful, wayward stream, When at their flood, thy waters seem With smiles demoniac a-gleam,

As if on mischief bent.

And oft, some luckless wight has striven
To stem thy maddened current, till driven
Where death alone has succor given,—
Canst thou not be content?

Strong men have struggled with the tide
Of all thy marshaled waters wide;
And well hast thou their strength defied,
Unmindful of their fate.

And once a mother, young and brave,
Was drowned when none were near to save;
And though she battled with each wave,
Thou wert insatiate.

O cruel fate! How terrible her fears!

No earthly friend her cry for rescue hears;

The angry flood drowns all her cries and tears;

Her story none can tell;

She met her doom unaided and alone.

How, for her babes, she loudly did bemoan!

Her last, wild prayer, alone to God is known,

Or why it thus befell.

And we, when homeward bound, once rode In terror through this swollen flood,—
The danger hardly understood.

We could not well turn back;
Our dear, sick boy lay helpless at our side.
Into his cheek crept up the crimson tide,—
Amid the waves out-spreading far and wide,
O, could we keep the track?

We found "Black Brook," as oft before, Had swept the broad, low meadows o'er, Reaching to the Kenduskeag's shore.

With fear my lips were dumb.

The gentle horses, onward urged,

Kept well the road, so far submerged,

While all around the water surged,—

And just beyond was *Home!*

In all our lives, there's many a place Where we a guiding hand can trace,— A memory time cannot efface,

Whether of joy or pain,—
And while the lights and shadows fall
Now bright, or darkly over all,
O let no doubts our hearts appall;
We do not trust in vain!

We, like this wayward, changeful stream,
Amid the shadows and the gleam
Of many a dark or pleasant dream,
Are journeying to the sea;

And, hurrying on, we often find
Many a thorny sheaf to bind,
Many a pathway, dim and blind,
Toward eternity.



OUT IN THE STORM.

A storm is raging in fury without, And wildly the snow-wreaths whirl about. The weird, wind-voices sad I hear, Like tones of grief or cries of fear. A piteous moan, or a bitter wail Comes surging along on every gale, Till suffering millions seem to sigh In a mingled note of agony; While Want and Cold, with their icy breath, Drag them along to the verge of death. And I sit list'ning, dreaming here, Till faces wan through the windows peer, -For Poverty stalks abroad. We know That thousands struggle with want and woe, Despair and crime; and God pity them! For the world sees only to condemn, And thrusts them out from the warmth and light Of joy and love into darkest night.

Gaily, by many a glowing hearth, Children are playing in joyous mirth. What care they for the bitterest storm In their cheery home-life, snug and warm? With a good-night kiss and a trustful prayer, They fall asleep, with no thought or care For the suffering little ones around, Who listen, perhaps, to the joyous sound Of their voices in play, their laugh and song, Till, heartsick and weary, they hurry along Their desolate way so dark, so drear. Their piteous pleadings I surely hear:

"Saviour is thy mission ended,
To the Father now ascended?
Is thy uplifting hand withdrawn?
Fiends to crime are beckoning on.
Lord, in mercy hear our cry,
Crushed by want and misery!"
Jesus speaks with accents loving,
Each impatient thought reproving:

"You may not our fullness see,—
I in God, and He in me.
Nothing lost, O holy Father!
All Thou gavest I will gather,
And will raise them up again,
Without blemish, spot or stain.
Willingly I would not grieve them;
I will ne'er forsake or leave them."

With joy, men must this truth receive, Who o'er lost sinners mourn and grieve. "Be merciful!" they beg and plead: Lookup and shout for joy instead! Even we would save all men from sin,
And bring the vilest wanderer in!
If such compassion be divine,
Dare I compare Christ's love with mine?
Can adding our poor mite of love
God's infinite compassion move?
We have His promise ever sure,
His love and mercy shall endure.
Knowing His boundless love and care,
We trust His goodness here, and there
Where is no storm, no cold or night,
No lonely outcasts from the light,
No aching hearts, no weary sigh,—
But love and joy and harmony.

We are His children, and we know
The love we on each child bestow;
And if our loved ones go astray,
We cannot tear our hearts away;
We follow them with tireless feet
Through winter's cold and summer's heat.
Had we His power to make them whole,
To cleanse and heal the sin-sick soul,
O, surely, we would never rest!
But we would seek with ceaseless quest
Till every one was gathered in,
Secure from all the wiles of sin,
And the last wanderer should come
Back to our arms.—all, all at home!

THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH.

These merry friends no longer come—Good fairies—to each hearth and home.

Some pitiless hand,
Or magical wand,

Has driven them out in the cold.

The dear little band Are now left astrand

On the bleak and desolate wold.

Once, they were spirits potential, And felt themselves consequential;

With no thought of fear,

Or of hearthstones drear,

They chirped through the livelong night;

In notes full of cheer,

So loud and so clear,

Sang blithely each dear little wight.

When daylight came, they crept away Into some crevice, so timid were they,

Till the fire shone bright

On the hearth at night;

Then out came their shy little feet.

Each dear elfin sprite

Sang loud with delight

Of the homelife cheery and sweet.

Once, in a cottage far away, A neighbor's house where I chanced to stay,

One dear little fay In a sleek suit of gray,

Looking so wise and so bright, With its wings did play

A sweet roundelay,

To brighten the desolate night.

I sat in the firelight glowing, Watching its coming and going:

It came out so still
From its corner chill.

To bask in the fire's ruddy light.

A soft little trill

The silence would thrill—

If I moved, it crept out of sight.

The Angel of Death came there that night And took in his arms a cherub bright;

And, winging his flight To the realms of light,

He carried their darling away.

Yet this chilling sight Could never affright

These fairy folks, trustful and gay.

Now, our children miss the hearing Of their music bright and cheering.

No warm hearths are left; Crickets are bereft

Of a shrine in each cottager's home;

These wee folks so deft Find never a cleft.

But shelterless ever must roam.

SNOW.

Over the earth the glittering snow
Sparkles with beauty to-night;
Diamonds and pearls in the moonbeams glow,
Flashing and gleaming with light;
The evergreens, laden with frost and sleet,
Like crystal minarets stand.
Father of light! Thou hast made it sweet
To live in this ice-clad land.

The snow-flakes have danced back and forth,—
Such weird, soft, fluttering things.—
Fairy-like elves, they cover the earth
With their tiny, outspread wings;
The rough, wild winds, so pitiless oft,
Shaking each sheltering bough,
Driving and whirling them rudely aloft,
Or deep in some crevice low.

A garment of beauty they weave
To garnish the poor frozen earth,—
Their busy, wee hands fain would leave
No vestige of blight or dearth,—
Like the mantle of faith, hope and peace
Falling on sin-blighted souls;
By the richness of truth, love and grace,
Woven in soft, shining folds.

Beautiful Snow! thy mission to earth,
Ere long, must surely be done!
Soon the birds will be trilling their mirth,
And the flowers peep out at the sun.
The pine-trees are whispering low
Of the coming spring-time bright,
And from the tips of their fingers throw
Thee farewell kisses to-night.



SEBASTICOOK.

On thee, my fair Sebasticook,
O how oft in dreams I look!
Like a picture rare and bright,
Thou art ever welcome to my sight.

Yet, unbidden start the tears, Even after many years, When each cherished spot I see, Still so fair, so dear to me.

On the bridge again I stand In the summer twilight bland, While the lengthening shadows deep, Like spectres o'er the water creep.

A mimic lakelet, clear and fair, Sleeps in quiet beauty there,— The moving tide a while delayed By granite wall and palisade;

Then downward rushing, rainbow-spanned, Making music deep and grand, Whirling, foaming, eddying by—Wheels and looms go merrily.

On thy face the tall church spire Leaves the sunset's kiss of fire; And, at morn, the sunlight sweet Glides across with noiseless feet.

Free at last from all restraint, Ceasing now thy dolorous plaint, Winding, hurrying on again From the busy haunts of men;

Over rocky shallows gliding, Or 'neath woodland shadows hiding, Singing, dancing here and there, In silver-crested ripples fair;

Round the hill where rest our dead, Passing now with muffled tread; Nevermore our dear ones waking, Never their long slumber breaking;

Onward, onward, loitering never,— This thy watchword now and ever,— Till thy varied tasks are done, And the brighter goal is won.

We will this grand lesson learn, For we, too, may not return,— We will do what good we may While we pass along our way.

We can ne'er our steps retrace, Or our thoughtless deeds efface: Right or wrong, false or true, Our record is whate'er we do.

MUSINGS.

How the night-time, still and starry,
Seems to hover over all!
With what mystic, magic glory
Do the silver moonbeams fall,
In my heart sweet memories waking,—
Sweet, yet O, how strangely sad!
As the past in retrospection
Mingles visions grave and glad.

Childhood had its wealth of gladness,
When bright angel-faces shone
From each fleecy cloud above me,
Ever smiling sweetly down;
God's great love and mercy clasping
All the world in close embrace;
Nothing to be feared or dreaded,
For I saw His shining face.

Through each leaf, each bud and bird-song,
Came His voice in love to me.

Nature sang a choral anthem,—
O, how grand her minstrelsy!—
Till my heart, with rapture thrilling,
Must in adoration bow.

Breathing, "Ever gracious Father,
Holy, O my God, art Thou!"

Years have brought me care and trial;

Much of sunshine and of shade;—
One by one, the bright tints changing,
Till life's rose-hued glories fade.

Much of weakness and of folly
Blots the page of every year;
And a sad voice gently chiding.

In the stillness oft I hear.

One by one, have many shadows
Dimmed my spirit's inner light;
Yet, perchance, to me have given
Other hopes and visions bright;
Through Thy grace, O God, inspiring
Aspirations good and pure,
Love and faith and trust unfailing;
For Thy promises are sure.



MARION LEE.

A blithesome child was Marion Lee,
A winsome country girl,
A sweet-faced little maiden
With never a dimple or curl;
Yet her spirit was joyous and sunny,
Clear and stainless as pearl.

She was quaint and quiet; in childhood
Aloof from all she played,
Or away on the craggy hilltops
In childish wonder strayed,
Where the ledges and granite boulders
The wildest pictures made.

She was sensitive and timid,
And shrank from every eye;
In self-distrust and shyness,
From strangers she would fly;
Only those who loved the child
Could win her heart so shy.

And yet, in the realm of nature,
She found friends everywhere:
In woodland, field and forest,
She knew each floweret fair,
And loved all bright-winged creatures,—
Insects and birds of the air.

She carried about in her apron
The curious pets she found,—
Big beetles, and caterpillars
Curled up so soft and round;
Or, if she chanced to find them,
In shrouds of satin bound.

These, like Pandora's fabled box,
Blessings with wings contained,
Which all too quickly flew away,
While naught, alas! remained;
In each fuzzy ball was hidden
A life yet unattained.

The gems and jewels of winter
Gave her the keenest delight.
She danced on the frozen brooklet
In the clear and frosty night;
Or flew o'er the crusted meadows,
Like a laughing, joyous wight.

She loved the deep-toned music
Of the noisy waterfall;
And the quiet, deep seclusion
Of the forest grand and tall.
She worshiped nature's beauties
And the God who made them all.

Books were the coveted treasures
Of this hungry-hearted child;
And oft her yearning soul the hours
With glowing dreams beguiled,
Of an enchanted world of lore,
Of sweetest hopes fulfilled.

The wonderful fountain of knowledge
Away in the distance gleamed.

O! when might she ever enter
This world of which she dreamed,
And gather its golden fruitage?
How rich and full it seemed!

To her, these coveted blessings

Came not with the passing years;

And her eyes, so weary with watching

Grew dim with sorrowful tears.

Then she knelt in the temple of nature,

Telling her griefs and her fears.

For we, in nature's solitude,
Come nearest the great Unseen.
We kneel in her "holy of holies,"
And the veil is rent between:
Aye! "the inner court" is opened
By God's gracious hand, I ween!

We worship so deeply His greatness,
His goodness and care over all,
If darksome and dreary our pathway,
To Him we can ever call;
For never, without His notice,
Can even a sparrow fall.

'Tis said, "They also serve the Lord,
Who only stand and wait,—"
And Marion could be wise and good,
Lamenting not her fate;
She could work in the Master's vineyard,
Toiling early and late.

At length, with blushes, as shyly
As flowers their leaves unfold,
Of a love that was almost worship,
A whispered story was told,—
So old, yet so new in its sweetness,—
A poem in "blue and gold."

Surely, sweet maiden Marion
Had found her favored knight!
And he loved her then and ever,
For her soul so pure and white;
And they, in a wildwood cottage, found
A home and a fireside bright.

The forest vanished, as one by one
The grand old monarchs fell;
And wide green fields and waving grain
Of tireless endeavor tell;
While here and there, on the hills around,
Young pioneers came to dwell.

And, as days and years sped onward,
In the cottages far and near,
The needy, and the suffering ones
Found help and comfort there;
For Marion's heart was strong and brave,
Helpful and full of cheer.

She made them garments, nursed the sick
With kindliest good will;
She helped them with her willing hands,
And taught them thrift and skill;
The poor and friendless came to her
Whenever things went ill.

Even poor simple-minded "Jim"

Lingered about her door,

And always, in his stammering way,

Repeated o'er and o'er,

Good wishes for his faithful friend,—

"Good wishes, if nothing more."

She pitied his poor darkened soul Struggling to find the light, Though hopelessly he wandered In a dark and starless night; Yet, to win her kind approval, He was eager to do right.

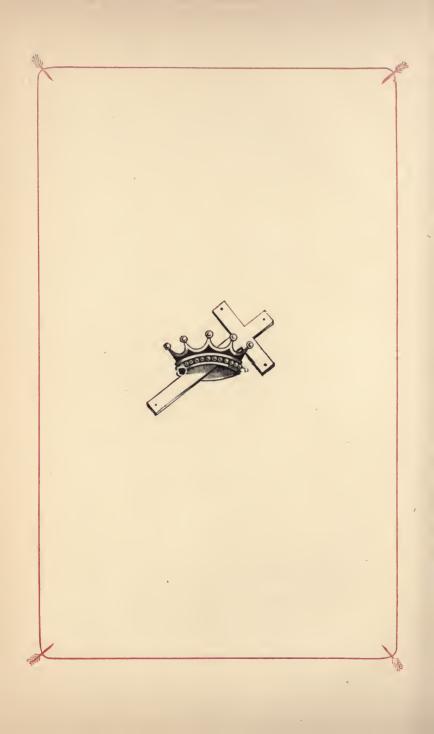
There was always room enough with them
For an orphan child, or more,
However many the "chicks" might be
In the dear home-nest before.
They had been orphans, and homeless, too;
And they opened wide their door.

Their charity was devoid of show
Or boastful pride and noise;
They never blew a trumpet loud,—
It was only "a still, small voice,"
A whisper, which, though soft and low,
Made many hearts rejoice.

O, such a life is beautiful!
So full of worthiest deeds,
And words o'erflowing from a heart
Which felt all human needs!
So full of love and tenderness,—
Pity which clothes and feeds!

Ah, Marion! in those earlier years,
Though gifts you sought, denied,
How beautiful the Master's hand
Could make life's eventide,
When, in the light of truth divine,
Your work was glorified!

RELIGIOUS POEMS.



"BOW DOWN THINE EAR."

O Lord, my God! bow down Thine ear! Thou knowest all my need.

O gracious Father, be Thou near!

For I am poor indeed,—

So weak, so erring in Thy sight,

Thou only canst direct me right.

"Be merciful, O God, to me!"

Daily aloud I cry;

And lifting up my hands to Thee,

On wings of faith I fly;

For Thou, O God, art good and kind,

And in Thy presence strength I find.

Thou art a shield! a shining sun,
Lighting the darkest place!
With-holding not from anyone
Thy favor or Thy grace;
Ruling in perfect equity,
In grand and peerless majesty;

Plenteous in mercy, truth and love;
Giving Thy grace to all;
Willing Thy gracious power to prove,
Whene'er Thy children call;
Seeking each wanderer to win
From the dark, thorny paths of sin.

We feel Thy presence everywhere.
All-holy as Thou art!
Thy never-failing love and care
Are precious to each heart.
O, may we worship and adore
And glorify Thee evermore!

How rapturous the notes of praise
Gushing from every tongue!
Yet, far above the hymns we raise,
The songs by angels sung;
Their glorious theme, I know, will be
A world from sin and sorrow free!



LEAD ME TO THE ROCK THAT IS HIGHER THAN I.

"Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I!" How often we utter this heart-yearning cry, When deep in the shadows of sorrow we lie.

This life seems so brief, and the way so obscure,—
How the heart fain would know there is something sure
On which it may rest, in the darkness, secure!

Our strength is but weakness. We haste on our way With a joyous heart, if one gladdening ray Of life's bright sunshine illumines the day.

But O! when the curtains of evening fall, And shroud our way like a funeral pall, Till gathering darkness o'ershadows all,

Where then is our refuge? Our Saviour is near! His smile ever gracious shall calm every fear, And Bethlehem's star light the wilderness drear.

'Tis then we may feel the Almighty power Of that arm which encircles us every hour, When the bright sun shines, or when storm-clouds lower. Our Father! our God! may Thy name be engraven On every heart, and Thy love's mighty leaven Fill our weak, fainting hearts with the glory of heaven.

Christ's blood shed for all! O, how good is our God! Though we often must bow 'neath the chastening rod, Our faith in our Saviour is boundless and broad.

How wondrous in equity, mercy and love!

His plans who can fathom? Yet onward they move,

And, at last, all shall meet in that bright world above.



THY WILL BE DONE.

Dim and obscure oft seems the way, By many cares hedged in each day; While eyes and heart the truant play, Seeking the light.

Through God's fair realm beneath, above, In fancy, spirit-winged I move, Till care and pain, by faith and love

Are glorified.

The wonders of this world divine, Its beauty, vastness of design, To see and feel and love are mine Forevermore.

The splendors of the fields and trees, All nature's forms which charm and please, Bring me their sweetest ministries Of peace and joy.

God gave them each and all to me;
I worship them most reverently
As parts of His divinity—
"Praise ye the Lord!"

O praise His name, that every day His hand doth lead us on our way! With sweetest trust, then, let us say, "Thy will be done."

THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

My spirit thrills with joy, O God,
While reading Thy inspiring word.

In every glowing line I trace
The richness of Thy truth and grace.
"O whither from Thee shall I flee!
Thou art continually with me."
Over, around, where'er I move,
I feel o'ershadowed by Thy love.

How can we deem Thee far away,
When Thou art nearer every day
Than we dare even dream or know!
With trembling hands, we searching go,
If haply we may find Thee near,
Or touch Thy shining garments fair;
While Thou art ever at our side,
Through all the way our surest guide.

I think, to-day, while looking back
O'er life's uneven, toilsome track,
Where I once thought the way obscure,
I plainly see that Thou wast near,
Leading me on through ways unknown,
When I believed myself alone;
My heart so full of grief and pain
I could not find the light again.

I saw not then Thy loving smile,
So sweet and tender all the while,
Still seeking, in my selfishness,
For more, deserving even less;
Borrowing oft a spectre load
Of care and trouble on the road,
While evils I had never feared,
With bitter grief my heart have seared.

Yearning to find the truest good,
When at the very fount I stood,
I took not from Thy proffered hand
The treasure sought, so rich and grand.
Help me, O God, to feel and know
That Thou art with me here below;
That I may ever surely be,
In spirit and in truth, with Thee.



KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

How little do we know of Christ, or God,
Of our almighty Friend and risen Lord!
So many creeds and mystic rites to prove,
We scarcely learn the lesson "God is love."
Yet with our boasted wealth of sacred lore,
We know not what the future hath in store.
The world moves on, with mingled joys and woes,
And what its wrongs shall right, God only knows.

To earthly idols blindly clinging close;
Grasping for gold, yet finding only dross;
Seeking for joy and peace in paths obscure,
Though Jesus shows a pathway safe and sure;
Toiling and fainting many a weary day,
While God and heaven seem very far away,—
We vaguely feel our need of guidance there,
Yet lift not up our hearts to God in prayer.

Anon, perchance, dark clouds bedim our sky,
And sudden danger, death and misery
Engulf the soul in surging waves of woe,
Till the heart's deepest founts of grief o'erflow,
'Tis then we lift up pleading hands and cry,
E'en while the Father has been ever nigh.
Watching with pity over our distress,
Yearning each wayward child to win and bless.

And when to Him, with aching hearts, we turn,
The truth so sweet and beautiful we learn,—
That God, our Father, is forever near,
To lift each burden, wipe away each tear.
Thy kingdom come, O God, on earth below!
Till all, Thy goodness and Thy mercy know;
And knowing, worship Thee with love sincere,
With humble reverence and with filial fear.

O, guard our feet from every hidden snare!
Hallowed be duty, sorrow, pain and care!
Till our uplifted hearts so pure may be,
That angels loud shall shout in ecstacy
O'er souls once lost in misery and sin,
To the Good Shepherd's fold now gathered in,
And O, what joy through paradise shall ring
When a rejoicing world His praise shall sing!



DEATH.

Death is called a mystic river,
Rolling onward broad and deep;
Through a vale of shadows, ever
Ceaselessly its waters sweep.
Our poor souls shrink back affrighted,
When we near the surging tide;
Yet the golden lamps are lighted
Just upon the other side:

While the grand and lofty portal
Of the pearly gate between
Earth and Spirit-land immortal,
Casts the shadows which are seen
O'er the wide-spread waters falling,
Silent, sad and sweet.
Why, then, do they seem appalling,
Though they fall around our feet?

Though the way seems dark and dreary,
Jesus walketh by our side.

He will pity us when weary;
He will bear us o'er the tide;
In His grace and loving kindness
We may trust forevermore.

He will take away our blindness
Ere we reach the shining shore.

THE MERCY OF GOD.

Great Father! source of love supreme,
Forever kind and good,
Thy mercy is our grandest theme,
A deep and boundless flood!

Baptize our souls therein, and send
Thy spirit like a dove,
Till all our hearts with Thine shall blend
In consecrated love.

A brotherhood in bonds of faith,
We love to sing and pray;
Clinging to Christ in life and death,
Nothing can bar our way.

Thousands, drear darkness groping through,
Shall soon the light receive;
And with rejoicing hosts renew
The cry, "Lord, I believe."

O, take away our sinful pride
And make us strong and true!
For God and Christ, whate'er betide,
Bravely our work to do!

Like children we desire to be,
In reverent love and fear,
Looking with hope and trust to Thee
For help and guidance here.

O, be Thou very near to all
Who seek to do Thy will!
Thou who dost heed the sparrows' fall,
Thy shorn lambs keep from ill.

May truth be precious in our sight,
While we our faith defend,
Crying with rapturous delight,
"Jehovah is our Friend!"



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



MY WEB OF LIFE.

Ah, sadly tangled are the silken threads With which I blindly weave, -poor, broken shreds! How can I mend my blunders here and there? How shall I blend the colors soft and fair? Alas! alas! try ever as I will. 'Tis all the same,—a hopeless failure still. Here, where the roses and the lilies white, I should have woven on a ground-work bright, Bordered with violets and daisies fine. Broidered in many a curious design,-Dreaming, perchance, the pattern I forget, And blur my work with tears of vain regret. If only I might pick the dark threads out, Which seem to turn the pattern all about; If ever fairest colors I might choose, Instead of all these dark and sombre hues. And try again, surely it would come right, In all the future, whether dark or bright.

Oft, in the past, has grim and stern Despair Torn mesh from mesh my silken network rare,— Each fibrous tissue a tenacious part Torn rudely from my quivering heart,— To teach me more humility, through pain. I tried to place the threads all smooth again, Striving to put blind, erring self aside, Crushing beneath my feet my foolish pride,— Like a caged wild-bird, chafing 'gainst the bands Which seemed to hold so tight my feeble hands,— I could not send the shuttle where I would, Or reach the tinted flosses where I stood.

If I could be more patient, trusting more, Waiting God's time and way to help me o'er The dim, dark places, often higher light Had brought new boauties clearly to my sight. Yet, God forgive me, if I sometimes feel My spirit fretting on the hard, cold steel! For hidden wheels with ceaseless friction move. And, right or wrong, some colors are inwove. The massive beam turns noiselessly around, On which the golden threads of life are wound: Though patiently we weave year after year, We know not if the end be far, or near. Like tinseled baubles vanish from our sight The things wherein we thought to find delight. Our deepest sorrow scarcely can efface The imperfect lines our weary fingers trace.

No web of all our weaving, bright or fair, With the Great Master's pattern can compare. Faith, hope and love may make our duty plain, And, in the future, aid us to attain New strength and skill. An unseen hand May help us weave a texture rich and grand, And make the woof our hands can not control, A fitting garment for the fairest soul.

LINES

Written to accompany a Christmas gift from Charlie Jerrard to his aunt Anna Russell.

In sweetest dreams oft comes to me A vision beautiful to see,—
A shining, white-winged argosy,
With dear ones filled.

These radiant forms about me move;
They bring me tokens of their love,—
Rich jewels from the courts above,
Divinely fair.

A wondrous wealth of joy untold,
Bright hopes and blessings manifold,
More than my outstretched hands can hold,
My mother brings.

She bids me these rich treasures share With all the loved ones everywhere, Who give to me their loving care

And sympathy.

Can you not see her starry wings, And hear the jubilant song she sings? Rare messages of love she brings To you and me.

O Father! kneeling at Thy feet, Make us like her as pure and sweet, With every grace of soul replete,— As true to Thee.

MOTHER AND CHILD.

[Inscribed to the friends of Charlie Jerrard.]

Here by my fireside, cozy, snug and warm,
I sit and listen to the dreary storm.
Around my door the wild winds whirl and crowd,
Till gable, sash and cornice creak aloud,
And the tall trees are by their fury bowed.
The graceful elms, in summer's pride aloof,
Now drag their ice-cold fingers on the roof:
In every blast their rigid branches shake
Till throbs of pity in my heart awake—
As if some living thing were pleading there
The warmth and comfort of my home to share.

Slowly are fading now the embers bright,—
I seem to see far out into the night,
Where silvery beams glint through a riven cloud,
And light the shadowy folds of earth's dark shroud.
Soft, wavering lights and shades are drifting,
Like foam-wreathed billows, falling, lifting,
Where, side by side, mother and child are laid—
One grave grass-grown, the other newly made.
And now I see a vision! Am I dreaming?
'Tis scarcely real; yet 'tis a pleasant seeming.

Beside me stands a rare and radiant form,
With face so sweet, so tender, loving, warm—
I have no words to tell how bright and fair
This being is! To breathe, I hardly dare.
And now another comes, beside her stands,
In joyful greeting clasps her outstretched hands.

"My mother! mother! I have come to you,
My darling mother, whom I never knew
On earth." With a glad, thrilling cry of joy,
The mother answers: "O my boy! my boy!
Long I have waited, watching day by day
Over your earth-life, never far away,
But near you always, though unseen by you,
I've helped to make you noble, good and true.
Thou wert blest in all things. Even a mother's care
Thou hast not lacked, or love, a measure rare.
For those who loved my child so tenderly,
My heart o'erflows with love and sympathy.
But when the Master deemed it wise and best
To take you here to be my loving guest,

With mother-love my heart was almost wild.

How in my arms I longed to take my child!

Here in this glorious world how blest are we!

There is so much awaiting you and me.

Such marvelous beauty you have never seen—

Rare birds and flowers of wondrous hue and sheen.

In yonder earth, soon fades the astrofel;
Here, ever blooms the lovely asphodel:—
But why should I forestall your glad surprise!
Come now with me where beauty never dies;
Waiting to greet you, many you will find."

One loving glance of recognition kind
They gave to me; then, vanishing from sight,
Left me to feel again the dreary night;
To hear the roof-tree sob and sigh and moan;
To see and know how desolate and lone
This earth-life is, compared with what may be
In store for us in God's eternity.



TO MRS. C. A. QUINBY.

Dear friend!—May I not call you such,
If friendship's test be simply loving much?—
All hearts respond to the inspiring touch
Of souls like thine.

We of like precious faith do honor you,
To woman's noblest intuitions true.
God give you grace, and strengthen you to do
Your work of love!

The unfortunate, the afflicted ever find In you a true and never-failing friend, Whose sympathy, so broad and kind, Infolds them all.

Co-worker with the faithful heart and hand Which holds so bravely over sea and land Our "Banner" with its colors grand,—
God bless you both!

How many hearts with gratitude o'erflow

For all your deeds of love, you may not know;

So oft it seems the goodly seed we sow

No harvest yields.

And they who battle for the right,
Sometimes despairing of the light,
Must walk through shadows black as night,
With bleeding feet.

Oft they must wrestle valiantly,
And suffer wrong and calumny;
For some are blind, or will not see
The better way.

So many choose and love the darkness more, When God himself, as ne'er before, With truth and light, from shore to shore, Has filled the world.

He spreads His gospel everywhere.

Mercy's evangels fill the air

With pleading words of earnest prayer;

Will they not heed?

Ah! noble workers, ye must wait.

Be patient, knowing, soon or late,
God's love o'ercometh wrong and hate,—
In Him we trust.

LIFE'S JOURNEY.

Many times, 'tis dark and dreary, Plodding on life's dusty road; And we linger, weak and weary, By the wayside, with our load.

Piece by piece, our pack unloading, Treasured jewels seem but dross, Till our hearts sink with foreboding And a hopeless sense of loss;

Counting o'er, with vain regretting,
What each golden grain has cost;
Never for an hour forgetting
How or where a gem was lost.

Lost and gone are many treasures.

When we feel their direst need.

If we miss life's sweetest pleasures,

Surely, we are poor indeed!

Oft we seek, on mountains lonely.

Wood to build our altar-fires.

Searching where we gather only

Worthless weeds and clinging briers;

Finding many a bramble lying
Where it most will pierce our feet;
Many a thorn, to patience trying,
'Mid the precious roses sweet;

Wondering if the vague to-morrow Will be brighter than to-day; If the sun will shine, or sorrow Like a cloud obscure our way.

Groping hence our way in blindness, Our poor souls have no disguise. Will God's gracious, loving kindness Fill our hearts with glad surprise?

Knowing all our past privations,
All the bitter now and then,
All our higher aspirations,
And, alas! "what might have been,"

When we reach that shining city, With its many mansions fair, Will He chide us most, or pity? Will He bid us welcome there?

Bowing down our faces tearful,
Father, let us cling to Thee!
Death's chill night seems dark and fearful,
If Thy face we cannot see.

Keep us, help us, now and ever!
Else our faith grows cold and dead.
Should all earthly ties dissever,
Let us trust in Thee instead.

TO MRS. ELIZABETH STONE.

I know how bitter was the cup God gave

To thee, my friend! how cruel was the wave

Of grief from which no earthly hand could save!

Trustful and true thy faith in God must be! His grace alone can thus enable thee To hide thy broken heart, that none may see;

Despite thy sorrow to be cheerful still, Bravely submitting to the Master's will, Knowing thy darling safe from every ill.

Sadly bereaved, yet blessed, O my friend, Art thou! The waiting soon will end. How joyously thy footsteps heavenward tend!



THE BETTER WAY.

Wilt Thou. O Father, lead us in the way
Wherein we ought to follow day by day!
O let us take Thy hand, behold Thy face!
O give us courage, hope and trustfulness!
We know Thy love our knowledge far exceeds.
Thy hand doth chasten while it gently leads
Nearer and nearer the invisible throne,
Where none have grace and strength to walk alone.

Ofttimes, forgetting God, in selfish pride,
We deem ourselves secure without a guide;
On luck or something else as vain, relying;
O'er trackless deeps to voyage safely, trying;
Around us gathered all we hold most dear,
Ah, what have we from wind or tide to fear?
Ere long, there comes an unexpected guest,
"Who waits for no man's leisure," whose behest
All must obey. Unwelcome and unasked
He comes to us; ofttimes, so shrewdly masked
We scarce suspect his errand or his will,
Till one we love lies pale and cold and still,—
The dearest always, be it a life or love,
With every fibre of our heart inwove.

And when we cry, low writhing in the dust, "Not this! not this! O spare us! we will trust And follow Thee!"— O mystery dark and deep! No answer cometh. Doth the Master sleep? 'Tis then we find the pathway we have trod So near to death, so far away from God,"

If hard and callous grows this human heart, Till all its finer impulses depart, What is our life-work worth? If this befall us. Its waste and desert sands may well appall us. We cannot "hush the wail of wasted years;" Useless alike our unavailing tears. We know the universe is not so wide That one may ever hope from God to hide, Or from His retributive justice fly. The Nemesis, the merciless pursuer, Memory, Our steps will track. Conscience will never sleep; But at his post strict watch and ward will keep. We try to lead this sentinel astray; Still, face to face, he meets us every day. In secret path or circuitous route; The wrong we do will surely find us out.

The better way where truth and duty lie
May not be hidden by our sophistry.
A purer life and better work we find.
When we forget and leave ourselves behind.

Unselfish ministration far outreaches.
And unto all a higher worship teaches.
The bravest souls all calumny outlive.
The noblest hearts are readiest to forgive.
The law of love all duty underlies,
And asks of us no needless sacrifice.

How oft some heart is left to ache and bleed, Silently breaking while we do not heed! Though justice, mercy, duty plead in vain, Still we inflict the needless, useless pain. What good may we expect or hope to find, If we are cruel, thoughtless or unkind? Can we boast greater excellence or worth? Our God is surely judge of all the earth! We cannot hide from Him our petty lies, Or often cheat the world in any guise. The false and true are in the balance weighed: Each life, like gold, is skillfully assayed. If we are vanity and folly choosing, The real good, the rarest treasures losing, Our conscience surely will not spare the rod, ' Until, with willing hearts, we follow God.



IN A PRISON CELL.

Alone in a prison cell to-night!

Alone with her child in the spectral light,

A woman shudders and creeps from sight.

Sad is her burden of torturing fears; Falling like rain are her gathering tears; Dreary and hopeless the future appears.

Poor little child! 'tis a fearful blight Which falls like a curse on thy name to-night, Though sinless thou art as the angels of light.

The hours pass wearily, slowly on.

O, when will the long, dark night be gone?

Pleading and praying she waits for the dawn.

She covers her head that she may not see

The phantoms mocking her misery;

Ah, little she thought what the end would be!

Oh! could she go back to her home the same As when a girl from its door she came, Pure and free from her sin and shame! Ere the tempter came with his smile so bland, And a glamour fell from his gilded wand, Till wrong seemed right in that "border-land"

Where demons disguised their victims meet; Where jest and laughter and music sweet Make the illusive picture complete.

Alas! alas! in the harvest time, When sadly the bells of memory chime, Bitter indeed are the fruits of crime.

Baby tosses and moans and weeps.
While a wee, soft hand to her bosom creeps.
Forgetting her sorrows, poor Magdalen sleeps,

Tenderly watched by the twinkling stars, Till the sunshine falls o'er her in golden bars, Though many a shadow its glory mars.

The bars of sunlight a ladder seem; And the footprints of angels softly gleam On its shining rounds, in her fitful dream.

Hovering near, they are seeking to win Her soul from the pitfalls and mazes of sin. God grant she may go no more therein!

THE NIGHT-WIND'S STORY.

Methinks, a weird, wild voice I hear Whispering in the night-time drear,—
A cry so weary and full of pain I listen to catch the sound again.
It seems a mournful, pleading cry,
Intense with terrible agony;
Now, a piteous, childlike wail
Heard afar in the distant vale.

Perchance, 'tis but some night-bird's song,
Perched the woodland trees among;
Or but a dream,—Earth is so fair
And glorious in her beauty rare.
The Night-wind, o'er me passing now,
With touch caressing fans my brow,
Saying sadly, "'Tis real and true
This pitiful story I whisper to you!

"Though God has made the earth so fair, Shadows and sunshine mingle there.

E'en in a world so full of light

Sin has left its terrible blight.

Deep are the footprints made by crime,—

Stern and dread as the march of time;
And suffering thousands weeping now,
Plead for our help in their night of woe.

"Intemperance sad work has made;
Fair hopes and homes in ruin laid;
While men look on with folded hands,
Whose strength and skill could rivet bands
Of iron, to bind this Monster strong,
Who drives his blinded, maddened throng
To the fearful margin of despair,
To sink in blackest darkness there.

"A throng is following in their train,—
Their's the sorrowful cry of pain,—
Pleading and praying God to save
Loved ones from this yawning grave;
Suffering, woe and deep disgrace
Written on each tear-stained face;
While the world has crushed them down
With its cold and cruel frown.

"Others far in the distance wait,
Watching, fearing some dear one's fate,
.Secure in boasted strength of will,
Yet surely onward drifting still.
With merry laugh, with jest and song,
The Tempter lures his prey along,

From gilded saloon to the vilest den Where sin has blackened the souls of men."

Ye sellers of the poisonous draught
By weak, blind brothers madly quaffed!
God will not always chide in vain!
Think not a moment's peace to gain
By your vile work! O let us pray
His hand this fearful tide will stay!
Then there shall cease this bitter wail
From drunkards' victims, wan and pale.



TO ANNIE,

ON HER SIXTEENTH BIRTHDAY.

Girlhood round thee softly weaves
A tissue broidered o'er with leaves.
With daisies sweet and violet wreaths.

Thy pathway now is bright and fair, With dewy gems and bird-songs rare, And dancing brooklets everywhere.

Thy spirit is as light and free As is the brown-winged honey-bee, Hovering o'er the clover-7ex.

Forget not thy Creator now! Whisper, while you reverent bow, Holy, O my God, art Thou!

Ever grateful peans sing, Purest, sweetest incense bring; For the Lord, our God, is King.

Leaning on His mighty arm, Fearing not the wildest storm, Never aught shall do thee harm.

SUBMISSION AND TRUST.

Across fair fields, where softly played Fantastic waves of light and shade, A maiden came, with footsteps slow, To watch the sunset's fading glow. The dusky twilight suited well The weary tale her sad eyes tell. Dwarfed by disease and cruel pain, Ne'er to be helpful, strong or well again, Crouching beneath a sheltering tree, She pondered o'er life's mistery, Which, round her wrapping like a cloud, Folded her spirit in its shroud. "O why," she sadly thought, "is there to be Never a day from pain or sorrow free? Why blighted hopes along the way Which once to me seemed fair and gay?"

Thus musing in despondent mood, Life seemed devoid of every good— A sad, a joyless boon indeed— No earthly friend of her had need. Now glancing upward wearily, As if some solace there might be, From 'mid the boughs above her head, Close nestled in its downy bed, A bird with sudden impulse springs, Fluttering long its dainty wings; And, as if it knew her thought, With its sweetest trilling sought All its wealth of joy to tell—And would fain her grief dispel. The very leaflets seem to dance, Waking her from her gloomy trance; And, looking now in glad surprise, As if with newly opened eyes, She saw the tokens of God's care In rich profusion everywhere.

Tenderly the twilight's glow
Bathed the dewy fields below;
While rarest-tinted gleams of light
Were softening slowly into night.
The moonbeams, creeping o'er the hill,
Glimmered upon the waters still,
Of a small lakelet, fair and sweet,
Whose silent, shadowy retreat
Was wrapt in drapery pure and white—
Soft, drifting wreaths of misty light;
While, like a friendly watcher, seemed
The light which from each cottage gleamed.
With mingled sense of joy and fear,

She felt that God was very near;
And, reaching out, she sought to grasp
The dear, strong hand, holding in clasp
The world so tenderly. God's love
All Nature's tuneful voices prove.
Why should her heart discordant be
With all this tuneful harmony?
Could she not bravely bear the rod,
Trusting the higher will of God?
Homeless and friendless, still she knew
His love was ever strong and true;
And, kneeling in the moonlight there,
She softly breathed her trustful prayer;

"O God! I'll question not Thy ways;
My lips shall ever speak Thy praise;
Thou givest more than I deserve;
From duty I will never swerve;
Forgotten be each bitter pain—
I will not be so weak again!
Thou knowest, Father, all my need—
Be Thou my comforter, indeed!
Henceforth, I'll ever look to Thee,
Nor murmur at my destiny.
Loving and trusting Thee alone,
Teach me to say, 'Thy will be done.'"

LIFE'S BURDENS.

We all, along life's dusty road,
Are bearing many a needless load;
We bend beneath its weary weight,
And think our burdens far too great,
So prone are we, forsooth, to borrow
Unreal troubles from to-morrow,—
Naming some shadowy semblance, Sorrow.

Too oft, we climb the distant hills

To catch a glimpse of coming ills;

Peering through mist and cloud, to see

If shadows in our path may be.

Still, God is near—our guiding star.

His helping hands reach out so far:

He knows our need, where'er we are.

Life's duties we can never choose.

Our burdens we must not refuse;

Yet, never let us add to these

A crowd of phantom miseries;

Nor grieve the loss of friends so dear.

Are they not with us everywhere?

We touch the shining robes they wear.

I know that sorrow comes to all,
And shrouds us in her sombre pall;
That every heart sometime must see
Its garden of Gethsemane,—
"Must kneel alone in anguish there,
And battle with some fierce despair;"
Yet God is with us, even there.

Darkness and clouds around His face
Cannot obscure its wondrous grace;
Nor does He ever fail to send
The gracious Comforter and Friend.
Then let us journey on, through faith,
Beyond the mystery of death,
Which now no sting or terror hath.



TO FRED.

Thy tender, watchful, loving care
Gives me the sweetest joy.

It makes all burdens light as air,
The roughest places smooth and fair.

I pray, God bless my boy.

O give him every perfect gift!

May he be good and pure,

Never in sin or doubt adrift!

His soul in Thy strong arms uplift

To heights sublime and sure.

May he, by faith's unerring light,
The All-Father, God, adore!
May no dark shadows dim his sight!
Wisdom and strength to do the right
O give him evermore!



RETROSPECTION.

Hush, sad thoughts, be still to-night!
You and I need rest and light.
Ask not what shall help us see
Through life's maze and mystery.

O, I miss the dear, kind faces, And the old familiar places; Each and all in pictures set, Surely, I can ne'er forget.

Other friends I may not find Like the old, so true and kind! Seeking sympathy and love, What of merit can I prove?

Can the sun or summer rain
Bring dead flowers to life again?
In my "home, sweet home" I live,
Asking not what few will give.



LOST AND FOUND.

A sweet child-maiden, like a sunbeam fair, Was my friend Edith, tripping here and there,-Of girlish innocence a picture bright. Her soft blue eyes so radiant with delight, Changing and sparkling with each happy thought, A deeper tint from her brown ringlets caught. Beloved, admired and petted everywhere,— Alas, that shadows fall on aught so fair! Folly and sin brought down upon her head A fiery baptism, direful, dark and dread; Scorching her very life; blighting with fears The joy and glory of her girlhood years. Who could reproach her in her misery? Who could but pity such humility? If she had sinned and brought this penance down Should she not work and win a victor's crown? With sad eyes piteous through falling tears, She looked down vistas dark; in coming years To meet, perhaps, cold words and cruel scorn, Till her poor aching heart was crushed and torn.

But God in pity took the withered flower To bloom anew in Heaven's celestial bower; Released at last her suffering soul, And made its crimson stains as white as wool: And we who, weeping, stood around her there, Saw death transformed into an angel fair; The cold, dark visage we had thought to see, Transfigured into love and sympathy. Rare, wondrous beauty met her earth-dimmed sight, And rapturous exclamations of delight Fell from her lips. Alas! no mortal eve With her beyond the vale of life could see! Unheard the music which relieved her pain! How sure were we the Lost was found again. She passed away, revealing to our sight A brightening glint of garments pure and white; Of "shadowy fleets sailing on unknown seas;" Of pearly gates beyond; of flowers and trees; And, wrapt in awe and wonder, well we knew That angels came to help our darling through That last ordeal; and on the other side, The blessed Jesus was her safe, sure guide.



THE GREAT REFORM.

We thank Thee, O our God, to-day,
That this good work is done!
They who have battled for the right,
A victory have won.

Each pine-clad hill and ice-bound glen
Echoes the great, glad cry,
"No longer here shall brother men
Upon the gallows die."

The earth is clad in pure white snow,
As soft as eider down,
Gleaming with pearls and brilliant gems,
Fair as a regal crown.

Thus fitly drest, dear Maine receives
The people's glad acclaim,
As, with uplifted hands, they wipe
This blot from her fair name.

Now take those spectral ruins down
And bury them from sight;
No longer may their shadows frown
Upon God's truth and right.

Honor and grateful praise we give

The noble, earnest few,

Who, heeding not men's scoffs and jeers,

To God and man were true.

We scorn to keep a barbarous law
In this enlightened land;
For Christ the Lord came not in vain
Upon His mission grand.

He taught us to be merciful;

He told us how to live;

He taught as never man before,

"Tis God-like to forgive."

"Vengeance is *mine*; I will repay,"

Is written in His word:

Evil with goodness overcome,—

This mandate ye have heard.

Though sin and crime and misery
Walk hand in hand to-day,
Remorse and terror, in their steps,
Follow the same dark way;

And he who plunges into crime,
Deep anguish must endure:
Though wicked hands together join,
His punishment is sure.

Then let our fallen brother man

Keep the poor boon of life,

Till He who gave that boon, shall end

Its bitterness and strife.

Keep him from dread temptation safe
Within the prison walls;
A life-long penance is enough,
Though Justice loudly calls.

Surely, at last, remorseful pains
And penitential tears
Shall wash away the fearful stains,
Through all the weary years.



TO ETHEL.

Out from her home the loving mother went,
Not knowing that the Master then had sent
His messenger for her,—that nevermore
Her feet should walk within that open door.
Yet from her lips as precious precept fell
As if she knew it was her last farewell.
"Be a good girl!" What more could mother say,
In tender admonition, ere she went away?
Deep in your heart, her words will ever be
A sacred amulet bestowed on thee,
To keep thy life from every evil free.
O, Father! Thou wilt ever keep and bless
With watchful love and care, the motherless.



TO BERTHA,

ON HER TENTH BIRTHDAY.

Happy child! with nimble feet,
Dancing through the hours;
In life's sunny meadows sweet,
Seeking fairest flowers.

Let no evil passions blight

These thy happiest years;

Gather fruits of truth and right;

Sow no seed for bitter tears.

By thy gentle, loving graces,
Lighten everybody's care;
Cheer the saddest hearts and faces;
Scatter sunshine everywhere.



THE SIBYL'S PROPHECY.

A wandering sibyl met a queenly maiden,
Whose heart with pride and passion seemed o'erladen.
She asked the dame her future to reveal,
And show her truthfully life's woe and weal.
The sibyl answered: "Unto me is given
The power to read the oracles of Heaven.
If thou dost deem the picture over-wrought,
Of evil too prophetic, ask me not
Why thus it seemeth,—only trust and wait,
And thou shalt see God's wisdom, soon or late.

"Thou hast a peerless form, a comely face;
For thy immortal soul fit dwelling-place.
And dost thou know it is a temple grand,
So strangely fashioned by God's sovereign hand?
This structure, wonderful in every part,
Contains a sacred shrine,—thy woman's heart.
And the Great King, the Almighty One,
Blest it, and called it good when it was done.
Thou art His child,—princess if He be king,—
And He has left to thee its care and furnishing.

"Into thy presence troop gay forms and faces, Bright Joy, with Mirth and many sportive Graces. Fair Hopes, sweet Fancies people every room,
Thronging the sunny chambers of thy home.
Here, Duty scarcely seems a favored guest.
Pleasure and Folly rule with high behest;
While Pride asserts her power to sway
The mystic cycles of thy destiny.
On dancing feet, the merry moments go,
With scarce a thought for all the wide world's woe.

"Years fly. With busy fingers, time and change Will bring to thee thy duties new and strange.

Life teaches sadder lessons, sterner truth
Than thou hast ever dreamed of in thy youth.
They are but myths, though precious in their seeming,
The dreams which all thy life thou hast been dreaming.
Thou wilt awaken from these visions fair,
When chilling sorrows meet thee, here and there.
Weary, and burdened oft with griefs untold,
And needless chidings, will thy heart grow cold.

"Trouble will come, with weariness and pain,
Where now, health, strength and beauty only reign.
Then gladly wouldst thou take the good King's hand,
And journey onward to the Better Land.
Alas! alas! thou canst not hasten there;
And if with breaking heart, must tarry here.
All have their work to do,—a vineyard fair
In the Great Master's realm,—somewhere,

A lifework grand, or dark and desolate; Whate'er, where'er the King may designate.

"Youth's sunshine fades. Shadows come darkly creeping Over the world, till Faith seems dead, or sleeping. One by one, fond dreams, bright hopes will fade; And fairest forms be numbered with the dead. With thine own hands oft must a grave be made, Wherein, some cherished hope or joy is laid,—Within the shadow of some deep recess. Where none will ever see or know or guess; Some inner chamber hushed and silent grow, Where joyous spirits once were wont to go.

"And there, perhaps, with cruel, mocking mien,
Those whom thou wouldst forget will come, I ween,
And crouch beside thy hearthstone night and day;
Nor canst thou drive the unwelcome throng away.
They'll crowd around the faithful sentinel
Who there will keep his post, guarding it well,
Else all the world may see—O God forbid!—
The gloomy phantons in each chamber hid.
O, strive to keep thy life unstained and pure!
'Break not, O woman's heart, but still endure!'

"Thy palace home too soon will crumble down, Decay and ruin claim it for their own.

Then the Great King, with kind compassion filled, Will come, its broken columns to rebuild;

To sweep the rubbish out, the dust of years,
And wash away the stains of oft-shed tears.
He'll light the chambers with a holier light,
And bring thee truer friends, with faces bright,
To drive away all doubt and darkness there;
And fill the garnished rooms with praise and prayer,

"With joy and peace, faith, hope and charity, With love and friendship true, with sympathy As sweet and beautiful as earth may know, Or God's kind hand on mortals here bestow: Then will the windows, even, blaze and shine With the effulgence of His light divine; And, through the open door, his angels go On holy ministrations to and fro,—

So changed, so wonderful will be its beauty, When love is law, and welcome every duty.

"Dost think my story an enigma blind?
Canst thou, therein, no hidden meaning find?
While thou dost fill thy heart with vain conceits,
And while a selfish greed thy spirit cheats,
While earthly good, alone, you seek to gain,
Thou'lt surely gather most of bitter pain.
When thou dost bring to God a willing heart,
And all thy gloomy doubts and fears depart,
Then will the Father make thy heart a shrine
Wherein His wondrous love and grace shall shine.

RAFFIE'S GOODNIGHT.

'Tis Raffie's bedtime, and he vainly tries To open wide his big, black, shining eyes. That he is sleepy, he cannot disguise.

He creeps into my arms, a welcome guest. He cannot quite forsake the cozy nest Where he has ever found his sweetest rest.

"O, how I love you mother, mother dear! But I am growing big and tall; I fear I cannot always come and nestle here.

"Now look! My feet will almost touch the floor. And see how high my mark is on the door, There beside Bertha's!—mine's a little lower.

"I'm 'most a man,—mother, you musn't smile! I love to cuddle just a little while, But not in any silly, baby style.

"With kisses, one, two, three,—a score, My mouth and lips are bubbling o'er.

O, I must kiss you just once more!

"Tuck me in bed now, and I'll go to sleep. No matter, mother, if the dark is deep. I know that God is good, and He will keep

"Me safe always. I'm sleepy quite; Please shut the door and take away the light. Another kiss, and now, mamma, good-night!"

TO VERNON.

On the eve of his departure for Poughkeepsie.

Dost know, my boy, how sad will be My heart, when thou art gone from me? How, day and night, I'll think of thee?

How I shall miss thee, everywhere! And every thought will be a prayer That God will keep thee in His care.

His love alone surpasseth mine, All-holy, infinite, divine,— A treasure which is always thine.

O, think of this, where'er you go,— The Father's love doth overflow All bounds and barriers here below.

Then firmly grasp His loving hand. Whate'er betide thee, firmly stand; To do the right, is brave and grand.

O God, Thou knowest all our need! The path of life is rough, indeed; And oft our wayworn feet must bleed.

Watch over him, our precious boy!
O, never may his hand destroy
Life's brightest hopes, earth's sweetest joy!

Thy hand alone canst safely guide His barque upon life's ocean wide, Now launching on a sunlit tide.

RESIGNATION.

I stood upon the border-land Of a country bright and fair, While life, in all its sweetness, Seemed fading from me there.

I could not leave my dear ones,A brighter home to gain;Though happy voices called me,My lips were mute with pain.

O why, in thought I questioned, Why must it be like this? So dim the path, in the darkness The way I'll surely miss!

A hand divinely tender
Then clasped and held my own.
I cried out in my gladness,
'Father, I'm not alone!

"O, help me to be strong and brave!
E'en though I may not see
My way through the mists and shadows,
I still will trust in Thee."

A little green grave
Where the maples wave,
Shadows my heart to-night;
And the bitter pain
Comes back again,
Till I cannot see the light.

OUR MISCHIEF-MAKER.

Dear Mira is my gleeful girl,—
My merry, sunny-hearted pearl.
Who would not laugh, must be a churl,
At her mimicry and fun;
And yet, when love or need demands,
Who has more helpful, willing hands,
More bravely in life's conflict stands
Till victory is won?

For much we prize an earnest will
The simplest duties to fulfill.
Mere words, not deeds, our spirits chill—
The winepress, Jesus trod!
We all, in humblest words and ways,
May chant our lowly, trustful lays,
Our songs of gratitude and praise,
Close in the ear of God.



THE SCOTTISH EMIGRANTS.

In sunny Scotland, near the ocean wild, Lived JasperMerton with his wife and child. A sweeter spot one need not hope to find. Beauties of earth and sea alike combined To charm the heart and please the loving eve. While Nature's lavish gifts their wants supply. Their darling Hilda was their pet and pride, Dearer to them than all the world beside. Fair as a flower, her sweet and tender face Told of a gentle spirit's winning grace And childlike trust. She never could disguise The grief or gladness speaking in her eyes. She loved the beauties of her sunny land, But most of all the ocean, wild and grand. In awe and wonder, oft alone she stood And reveled in its wildest mood, Answering back with gleeful song, Which echoed far the crags among, The joyous music of the waves Through rocky reefs and sounding caves. A rhythmic melody they sang to her, Their reverent, loving worshiper. She watched the seabirds sporting there

Till the waters sparkled with jewels rare;
Each one, to her laughing eye, a gem
In Neptune's wonderful diadem.
She seemed so much the spirit of the place,
The bounding billows well might love her face.

Rachel, the mother, idolized her child, And her pure heart with pleasant fancies filled. She sat with her beneath the forest trees, And bade her listen to the tuneful breeze; Taught her these monarchs of the woodland green, Standing so proudly in their velvet sheen, Were guardian spirits watching o'er their weal, From whom, their sorrows they could not conceal. If trouble came, they found sweet sympathy In every humble flower and forest tree: Believing this, their simple hearts drank in The purest pleasures, free from guile or sin. Thus Hilda, child of this secluded spot, By Nature's sweetest voices had been taught, Till her glad heart exulted in its store Of hidden meanings and unwritten lore. Living a life of such simplicity, To her unknown were sin or treachery.

Ere long, a band of emigrants besought
The family to leave this much-loved spot;
And joining them, at length, they leave behind

Their fatherland, another home to find In broad America,—our pride, our boast,— A refuge for the eager, restless lost Who seek a better, happier home to gain, Finding, alas! so much of homesick pain. The tedious voyage soon was safely o'er, And they were landed on this looked-for shore. Here, everything to them was strange and new. They knew not where to go, or what to do. People who all their trials understood, The homeless throng with friendly pity viewed.

A smiling emissary from Brigham Young, The foul, false prophet, came the crowd among. Finding the Mertons friendless and alone, (To them his dark designs were all unknown) He pictured Utah as the brightest spot In which a stranger here had ever sought To find a home. With seeming friendly care, He kindly offered to escort them there. They, unsuspicious of his crafty wiles, Saw not beneath the glamour of his smiles, So glad were they, so grateful here to find A friend who seemed so pious, good and kind. Like birds attracted in their flight By some alluring beacon light, They blindly walked into his artful snare, And journeyed west, with others, in his care.

Near Salt Lake City locating, ere long,
They found themselves amid a motley throng
Whose customs most repulsive seemed to them;
While their religion they could but condemn.
They felt like exiles, friendless and bereft,
And mourned for the dear home in Scotia left.
But why review the dark and sorrowful years
Of Rachel's life, or Hilda's boding fears?
Grieving for their loved cottage by the sea,
And the old life, so joyous, glad and free.

Though Jasper mingled with the wily "saints," He long withstood their subtle arguments. His innate love of truth and right was strong. His soul revolted at the thought of wrong. Yet, in an evil and unguarded hour, He yielded to their strange, seductive power. On Hilda, too, a "saint" had cast his eyes, Urging, with all his pious sophistries, Her duties to the church; but yestermorn She had refused his suit with deepest scorn. She sat in silent grief and sadness now, Her hands pressed tightly on her throbbing brow; The girlish face, so innocent and fair, The saddest picture of untold despair: A fearful sense of their impending doom Filling her heart with bitterness and gloom. Hushed was her merry laugh, her joyous song,

In the dark shadow of this cruel wrong.

Despite their pleading words and piteous tears,
The worst had come, the climax of their fears,—
Another wife was brought their home to share.
Poor Rachel, broken-hearted, met them there.
She stood a moment dumb; then, with a cry
Wrung from her breaking heart's deep agony,
While clasping in her arms her sobbing child,
She to her husband spoke, with anguish wild:

"O Jasper! Jasper! can it really be That you have brought such cruel grief to me? How have I lived through all this dread suspense? A wife no longer, in the holiest sense! God knows I loved my husband, kind and true; But now I loathe and scorn to live with you. This vile iniquity I will not brook! Never again mock me with word or look! You are dead and buried evermore to me, Now that your love is changed to mockery. 'Prayers cannot help, else would I ever pray; Nor tears, else would I weep the livelong day.' Now we must leave this desecrated home, Wherein we never, never more may come--My home, once dear and sweet as home could be! How many tokens of our bliss I see, Ere this delusive, mocking madness came, Clothing such sin in pure Religion's name!

O, vile Poligamy! Thou pestilence!
Who shall stay thy hand or drive thee hence?
Leading to crime by thy seductive arts—
Thou spoiler of our homes! Shall breaking hearts
Plead vainly? Slumbers a nation's power
While gathering tempests darkly lower
Over her head? Oh, must this dreadful blot
Rest on her name? and will she heed it not?
Once was her life-blood spilled, to free from chains
The suffering millions in her fair domains:
How will her hand wipe out this fouler stain,
And make her borders pure and clean again?

"My child! my child! you must not, shall not know This keenest acme of a woman's woe!

One door is open—God forgive the thought!

For grief has my poor soul to frenzy wrought.

I cannot, will not live! One boon I crave:

O, let us find sweet solace in the grave!"

As from a home where death each tie doth sever,

Mother and child went out therefrom forever.

From bitterest sorrows which have no redress,

Together now they seek forgetfulness.

With arms entwined, in the soft light they walk,

And long and lovingly together talk;

Then, kneeling, pray with tearful earnestness:

"O Father! pity us in our distress!

With broken hearts, from sorrows dark we flee.

Now, O our Father, let us come to Thee!

Driven from home, we can no longer live,—

If it be sinful, O our God, forgive!"

This prayer alone their trembling lips could speak: Death's sweet release the only boon they seek. Saw they the gates of the eternal City? Saw they, with looks and words of tenderest pity, The throng of angels o'er them lowly bending, Their helping hands so eagerly extending? One moment on the river's brink they stand; One look toward heaven: then, hand in hand They spring far out into the crystal tide, Whose limpid waters all their sorrows hide, Over them closing in a last embrace, Giving to them a welcome resting-place,-The loving mother, sorrow-stricken wife, The fair young maiden in her beauty rife, Who choose, alas! together there to die, Thus from their jovless, hopeless life to fly.





EARLY POEMS.



TO A MOONBEAM.

Bless thee, Moonbeam! peering quaintly In my window, smiling faintly, With a look half gay, half saintly!

Dost thou know why I am sitting In the twilight shadows flitting, Till the starry lamps are lighting?

Thinkest thou my heart is weary? That life's path is growing dreary, Ever deemed so sweet and flowery?

No: ah, never! from above me Would the holy stars reprove me, Sweetly smiling down, "I love thee."

Is it but a childish dreaming?
Is it but an empty seeming?
Are the stars but coldly gleaming?

Everywhere on earth I move, Of the hosts beneath, above, I would ask of all for love; Of the singing birds and flowers, Of the gently-falling showers, Of the stilly, moonlit hours,

Of each dear one I may meet, Of each kindly face I greet; Give me this panacea sweet!

I've formed for all a standard high; They do not reach it, nor may I: The towering cliffs my strength defy.

But there is *One* who sees and knows Whence every aspiration flows, And He each perfect gift bestows.



TWILIGHT.

Sweet Twilight! 'Tis the holiest hour
Of all the glorious day;
When the burning sunlight in the west
Fades silently away,
And the gorgeous clouds which hung around
The dying Day-king's head,
Into the mystic, shadowy gray
Of evening softly fade;
While darkness, stealing o'er the earth,
Brings strange, fantastic beauties forth.

The sun upon the western hills
Lingers a little while,
Casting around his kingdom vast
A last departing smile:
More brilliant than the day's full light,
The splendor of that beam,
Making the train which round him wait
With brighter glories gleam;
Flashing the dazzling army o'er;
Then, vanishing, is seen no more.

Now Twilight over hill and glen As soon is seen to glide, And kneel beside the gilded couch Where the proud monarch died; Her flowing robes agleam with tints Of silver and of gold, As, weeping pearly tears of dew, She gathers up each fold, Then drops a curtain o'er the west Where sank her mighty sire to rest.

A feeling of sublimest awe
Her presence doth inspire,
So soon she spreads a dreamy shade
O'er sunset's glowing fire;
And with a rapturous wonder
Blends a delirium sweet,
When o'er the earth she lightly hies,
Her sister, Eve, to meet;
And hand in hand they pass from sight,
Leaving the star-crowned empress, Night.

O God, how beautiful this world!
How great Thou art, how wise!
How passing fair and wonderful
Thy works around us rise!
Thou art supremely good,
And infinite in power.
O, who could doubt a hand divine,
To see and feel this hour?
I must adore, else I were blind:
Keep Thou such darkness from my mind.

EVENING PRAYER.

Father! I bow with thankful heart this day
To Thee. O wilt Thou hear my prayer?
Far from the tumult of the world away,
I feel, O God, Thy presence everywhere!
The very stillness breathes Thy name,
Awakening a purer flame
Of sacred love within my inmost heart;
Bidding distrust and doubting fears depart;
Whispering, "Peace be still."
Give me, my Father, more of trusting love
In Thee, Thou ruler of all things beneath, above!
Help me to do Thy will!

Father! I ask not fleeting wealth or power,
Nor heartless worldly fame I seek;
But in the stillness of this vesper hour,
Clinging to Thee, I fain would speak
Sweet words of gratitude and praise
For Thy all-holy, wondrous ways.
Though wrapt in mystery oft they seem,
Thy smile through every cloud doth gleam,
Lighting the darkest night.
Though all forsake, Thou art a refuge sweet,

A light to guide our weary, erring feet To joys earth cannot blight.

I humbly ask that virtue's shielding wing
Be ever o'er my pathway spread;
That I to truth and purity may cling,
And be by wisdom's precepts led.
May envious hatred never stain
My heart; but generous love again
Waken a sympathetic tear for others' grief,
Prompting self-sacrifice to give relief
To those with want oppressed;
Thus reaping joy, contentment, love and peace,
The richest harvest of terrestrial bliss,
And Heaven's eternal rest.



VIA LACTEA.

When night her canopy unfolds,
This wonder every eye beholds.—
A pathway through the heavens broad;
Even the footprints of our God!

When first the stars together sang, And the whole host exultant rang, His holy feet this pathway traced, Which age on age hath ne'er effaced.

His power the mighty plan defined,— Millions of shining orbs combined Their dazzling light; planet and sun Through infinite space together run.

The eye of man, unaided, sought in vain Their mingled light to separate, explain. His bold research the telescope assists, And now resolves those brilliant, shining mists.

Whene'er we scan the starry sky, we see New forms of grandeur and immensity. At every point, such glorious truths unroll, Amazement, wonder overwhelms the soul!

He whom alone the heavenly hosts obey, Ordained the sun to be our light by day.

He gives the moon and stars their lesser light To illuminate and beautify the night.

WHY AM I SAD?

Why am I sad, when all the world
Around me is so fair,
While yet so young I scarce have known
A shade of grief or care?
Why come unbidden to my heart
These thoughts so strangely sad,
When Nature's sweet and sunny smile
Seems bidding me be glad?

I look around upon the earth,
Upon the far-spread sky,
And O! such brilliant beauty,
Such glory meets my eye;
My heart is filled with love divine!
Such sweet ecstatic love,
I seem to mount on spirit wings
And through Elysium move.

A flower, a bird's sweet carol free, A gaily-singing rill, With sweet and tender memories Doth make my spirit thrill; And sweeter pleasures cluster Within home's precincts dear, With father, mother and the band Of loved ones gathered here.

Then why so oft will sadness come, A visitor unloved?
Would that her chilling presence
Forever were removed!
She folds her wings above my head
Where'er I chance to be,
Seeking to darken all the light
Of love and joy for me.



FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

Hark! the dreadful din of battle
Cometh from a land afar!
Hear the thunder, crash and rattle
Of the dauntless demon,—War!

On with dreadful fury rushing,—
Deafening drum and bugle-note,
Gleaming sword and saber flashing,—
Wreathed in smoke their banners float.

There the brave, the true are falling,
Dead and dying side by side;
While with cannon-roar appalling,
Rushes on the fearful tide.

One is there, a ministering angel,

Lingering near each dreadful scene,—

Gentle Mercy's sweet "Evangel,"

Brave of heart, with face serene;

O'er each couch of anguish bending, Binding up each bleeding wound; Like a seraph pure descending, Spreading peace and joy around. Bravest of old England's daughters, Thou hast won a lasting name! O'er Atlantic's wide-spread waters Comes the glory of thy fame.

Well Britain's queen may deck thee
With her rarest, richest gem;
Yet a brighter crown awaits thee,—
'Tis a heavenly diadem!



SADNESS.

O'er my weary head a phantom
Folds her gloomy wings to-night;
Darkly o'er my tear-damp pillow
Falls her boding, spectral light.
Through the long, lone hours I've waited,
Waited vainly for her flight;
Still her vigil near she keepeth,
And her wild eye never sleepeth,
Still so stangely cold and bright;

Till my sad o'er-burdened spirit
Uttereth an anguished cry,
"Is there none to aid, to save me
From this crushing agony?
Must this gloomy, ghostly phantom,
Ever o'er me brooding nigh,
Fill my weary heart with blackness,—
Starless and undawning darkness,—
Shadows that may never fly?"

Yet no ear my wild cry heedeth,
All is blackness as before;
Till my tortured spirit shrieketh,
"Stay! for I can bear no more!
Do not let thy dreadful presence
Cast a deeper shadow o'er!"
Still the silence grows more weary,
Still the solemn night-time dreary
Shrouds my spirit evermore.

GLADNESS.

Welcome! mystic, merry spirit!

Twice, thrice welcome here to-night!

For thy sweet smile o'er my pillow
Casts a joyous, softened light.

Prithee, Gladness, fold thy pinions!

Never would I wish thy flight,
With the stars thy vigil keeping,
Whose bright eyes are never sleeping,—
Thine are not less bright.

When thou art near, my joyous fancy Fetterless as air doth fly,
From the beauteous earth beneath
To the stars up-regioned high.
All the world is robed in glory
When thy magic wand is nigh;
Vanishes all midnight blackness,
Joy-light springeth out of darkness,
Lighteth up the saddest eye.

Out in songs of merriest laughter
Gushes now the jubilant earth;
While our blithesome hearts are brimming
Over with ecstatic mirth;
And the varied forms of nature,
In fresh beauty shining forth,
Cheer and light each soul a-weary,
Till the darkest path seems flowery,
Spoiled no more by blight or dearth.

TO S. W. CROSBY.

Dear Sybel, dost remember Our happy, school-girl days, When we were free and joyous As the zephyr bland which strays In each leaflet-nestled covert, In those cosy wildwood bowers Where we have together spent Our wildest, merriest hours, Chasing gay-winged butterflies, In each grass-grown nook; Weaving modest violets Down by the babbling brook? Then the trees, the birds and flowers Made Earth seem an Eden fair. Thinkest thou, dear friend, again We shall be so free from care?



THE PENITENT'S APPEAL.

My Father! O my God! wilt hear
My penitential prayer?
Though I have wandered far from Thee,
And merit not Thy care,
I feel Thou wilt not turn away
When erring children kneel;
But Thou wilt heed—in mercy heed—
When sorrowing hearts appeal.

With rainbow visions I had clothed
This changeful, fleeting life,
Unconscious, in home's guarded walls,
Of all its woe and strife;
Shielded by watchful parents dear
From the world's chilling phase,
Till life seemed but a dream of love
To my unwearied gaze.

I shrink as my maturer sight
The blotted page unrolls;
For, far and near, 'mid wails of woe
The death-bell sadly tolls;
And dark depravity and sin
Have spread their direful trace,
Till, as I look, a blackened veil
Rests o'er the earth's fair face.

I look within; my own heart meets
Me with accusing pain;
Far, far from Thee, a giddy child
Living almost in vain!
Yet seeking for a nobler life,
Yearning to feel Thy love
Like sunlight falling on my soul,
Its darkness to remove!

I can but turn to Thee; for here
Alone is refuge sweet.
Thou wilt forgive my sins, and give
Me strength and wisdom meet
To do Thy will. Keep Thou my thoughts
From evil all my days,
Nor let my vain and careless lips
Forget to sing Thy praise!

O, Thou art good and merciful!
When shall we cease to sin?
Ah, never till "beyond the gates"
We all are gathered in!
We are so frail, so weak, 'tis hard
To keep the narrow way;
But in that brighter, fairer land
We shall not go astray.

"COME UNTO ME."

"Come to me," the Master sayeth: Who this earnest call obeyeth? Who, alas! the time delayeth?

The church is needy of each friend Of God, as watchmen to defend The right, the wrong transcend.

'Tis sweet, dear Jesus, to abide With Thee; to know we have a guide Who ne'er forsakes, whate'er betide,—

So near that we may touch the hem Of shining garments, cling to them, And find the new Jerusalem,

Whose sapphire walls a softer glow Over the darkest paths will throw: And faithful, trusting souls may go

And stand within the holy place; Or, bending, seek the Father's face And the outpouring of His grace.

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The Saviour came to claim His own: O, never was such kindness shown, Never was such compassion known!

And will His children turn away? O, let us come to Him to-day, And at His feet an offering lay.

We know He calls us; yet we fear, So poor and weak our hearts appear, Some hidden foe may linger near

To lead our feet astray. Dear Lord, We have the promise in Thy word Our cry for strength is ever heard.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF DEATH.

A neighbor's child was breathing
Its precious life away;
And, to their rustic cottage,
I went the night to stay.

Watching beside the mother
In the dimly-lighted room,
A child of dreams and fancies,
I felt and feared the gloom.

Through the low, uncurtained windows,
Peered the blackness of the night;
Nor moon, nor star, through rifted cloud,
Sent in its cheering light.

The firelight filled with spectres

Each shadowy recess.

What death was like, I did not know—
I could not even guess.

Oh, where was God? I felt adrift Upon a shoreless sea. I could not, dared not question This dreadful mystery. The stillness was unbroken.

Save by a word or sigh,—
Or were the angels round us,
Singing baby's lullaby?

Was it a dream? My listening ear The softest whispers heard; While, over all the darkness, shone The glory of the Lord—

A heavenly light, dispelling
All gloomy fear and dread,
Although I heard them whisper
So low, "Baby is dead."

I left the lowly cottage
In the morning's early light,—
The weary little wanderer
Had fluttered out of sight,—

And death, that dreaded presence,
So dimly understood,
Was forgotten in the vision
Of ever present good.



FAITH.

How beautiful this earth, replete
With sweetest melody!
My heart with blissful thought o'erflows,
Purest and holiest joy.
The world is bright; noon-day and night
Alike bring joy to me.
I trust in Him who fills with light
Time and eternity.

Thou dost in love afflict, O God!
Thine is impartial love.

Never in anger falls the rod;
Thou wisely dost reprove,
Pointing us upward to Thy springs
Of truth and love divine,
Lifting our thoughts to nobler things,
Making us truly Thine.



CHRISTMAS GREETING.

[Recitation for a Child.]

With sparkling eyes and faces bright, And hearts o'erflowing with delight, We meet together here to-night.

And is it not beautiful to see

These splendid gifts on our Christmas tree?

Something, perhaps, for you and me.

Father in heaven, we look to Thee! Thy goodness in all this we see! We thank Thee, Father, reverently.

We thank Thee for our friends so dear, Whose loving tokens greet us here, Each eager, waiting heart to cheer.

Our Pastor, too, how glad are we A faithful teacher such as he, The Master sent our guide to be!

A servant of the living God, With Gospel-sandals firmly shod, He leads the way where Jesus trod. And, surely, friends, we will not try
To find one mote in his thoughtful eye,
When a beam, perchance, in our's may lie.

May sympathy, trust and love alone, To him and his gentle wife be shown, Who have left warm hearts to cheer our own.

And, dearest Saviour, most of all We would Thy lowly life recall, Who loves us little children all,

And bids us come to Thee. O yes, Thou wilt our waiting spirits bless With purity and holiness!

"Peace on earth, good will to men,"
We hear the angels sing again:
To Thee, O God, we chant the strain!

We thank Thee that Thy skillful hand, Unerring in its wisdom, planned. A destiny for all, so grand;

That all, at last, with Christ shall meet To worship at Jehovah's feet, When victory shall be complete

O'er sin and death, sorrow and pain, And nevermore a blot or stain On the fair Book of Life remain.

BESSIE.

Sweet girlhood, true and pure and fair.
Is a type of angelic beauty rare;
And innocence, purity and truth
Are the choicest gems in the crown of youth,
To be prized and guarded well, forsooth.

Ah, Bessie! poor Bessie! how little you knew In this wicked world the false from the true! So merry, so thoughtless, so free from guile, When the tempter came with his winning smile, How could you know he was heartless and vile?

With girlish vanity, careless and wild, You gave him your heart, poor deluded child! He who to one had been false and untrue, Soon or late would turn traitor to you, And leave you as quickly another to woo.

Soon faded and fallen your rose-tinted palace;
Drained to the dregs grief's bitterest chalice.

Death kindly released you from sorrow and strife,
When your poor heart was broken—blighted your life.—
How dreadful the thought,— a deserted wife!

Poor Bessie! we pitied you, suffering so, Maddened and crushed by this cruel blow. He was your idol: you worshiped a stone. "Other women have thus laid down Their hearts for a Judas to trample on."

We gave your deceiver our bitterest scorn.
Better for him had he never been born!
With his burden of sin, let him go his way:
On his blackened heart, God has written to-day,
"Vengeance is mine! I will repay."

REUNITED.

The one was taken, the other left,
They who were long since wed;
And it seemed so hard to leave her
Alone in her cold, cold bed;
With no loving heart beside her
There with the silent dead.

He tarried awhile till the Master
Called from the other shore,
Bidding the boatman carry
The white-haired pilgrim o'er,
Where ever patiently waited
The one who had gone before.

And O! how glad was the meeting
Of these loved ones over there,
When the fetters of earth-life melted
Away in the glory rare,
Which, softly falling around them,
Transfigured the aged pair!

TO MY SISTER.

Thou askest a memorial:

What shall affection bring?

A prayer from the heart's inmost depths

Were holiest offering.

Though humble is the gift I lay
Upon this sacred shrine,
Perchance, it may be dear to thee
Because the gift be mine.

I cannot, from my inner world
Of tossing, billowy thought,
Bring thee a sparkling pearl, a gem
Elaborately wrought;

Yet, on the wings of love, my thought Soars from the chaos there, And for each dear one fondly breathes A soul-impassioned prayer.

For thee I ask the richest gift
To mortal ever given,—
The beacon light of faith and hope
To guide thy feet to heaven.

May truest friendship ever twine
A garland for thy brow;
And may the virtuous and good
On thee their love bestow.

And as the morning of thy life
Thus far has smoothly flown,
So may God bless thee evermore,
And those thou callst thine own.

Yet, sister, if the clouds do lower
Darkly around thy head,
Hear thou above the tempest's roar,
"'Tis I, be not afraid!"

And when thine eyes at last shall trace
The vista dim of years,
O, mayst thou read a blotless page,—
A page undimmed by tears!

May this around thy couch of pain
A heavenly halo fling;
And may the victory of faith
Rob death of all its sting!

'Tis ever true, "the might have been"
Seems something sweeter far
Than all our gifts and blessings,
However great they are;
For the brightness of their beauty
Some blot will surely mar.

HYMN.

Great God! our Father and our Friend!
To Thee our songs of praise ascend.
O, bless Thy people everywhere!
Fill every heart with praise and prayer.

We thank Thee for the Christian band Who cherish hopes so great and grand; And help us now, O gracious God, To spread Thy mighty truths abroad.

We come with heartfelt love and zeal; And humbly, trustingly we feel Thy presence with us through all time,— Thy grace inspiring, faith sublime.

We know that Thou to man hast given Truths which, like thunderbolts, have riven The clouds of error, doubt and fear, And left Thy "bow of promise" there.

We know Thou doest all things right. Lead Thou Thy children in the light! The Christian's armor let them wear, Nor error's grievous burdens bear. O, cleanse our hearts from doubt and sin!
Let holy aspirations in;
And earnest workers we will be,
To reconcile the world to Thee!

May we not call the present time,
In God's good providence, sublime?
There's room enough for souls to climb
High up on shining ground.
Each struggling one who humbly pleads,
Finds help and strength for all his needs,
For work and worship, noblest deeds,—

A hero may be crowned.



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